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ABSTRACT

This report describes how different European countries deal with the issues and practicalities surrounding their efforts to integrate pupils with special education needs. More specifically, it focuses upon the current "state of the art" in school integration policies and practices in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, England and Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Holland, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. Beginning chapters explain the framework and methodology of the research and provide descriptions of the individual countries. The book then analyzes definitions and assessment of pupils with special needs, the number of pupils with special education needs, curriculum and teaching in relationship to special educational needs, the role of special schools, parents and attitudes in society, and barriers to integration. Results of the study indicate: (1) there is a clear development toward the transformation of special schools into resource centers; (2) every country has already implemented, or is implementing, policies that will make integrative education possible; (3) the number of pupils registered as having special educational needs varies enormously; and (4) countries in the northwestern part of Europe appear to place pupils more frequently in special settings as opposed to southern European and Scandinavian countries. (Contains 11 references.) (CR)

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Integration in Europe:

Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Trends in 14 European Countries

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Integration in Europe:

Provision for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Trends in 14 European Countries

Editor: Cor J.W. Meijer

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

- on behalf of the European Commission - General Directorate XXII. May, 1998

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Preface

This study report describes how different countries deal with the issues and practicalities surrounding their efforts to integrate pupils with special educational needs. More specifically, it focuses upon the current 'state of the art' in school integration policies and practices in 14 European countries, i.e. all the countries of the EU (except Ireland and Luxembourg) and Norway.

This document has been prepared on the behalf of the European Commission which asked for a re-assessment of the current situation with regards to integration and a description of developments since the situation as described in the EC study *Report of the Commission on the progress with regard to the implementation of the policy of school integration in the Member States (1988-1991)*, published in November 1992.

The study was completed at the beginning of 1998 and the descriptions and findings refer to the situation up to the end of 1997. In June 1997 a questionnaire was sent to all the Agency Working Partners in the participating countries and these Working Partners submitted country reports during the second half of 1997. It is on the basis of these country reports that this current synthesis report of the study was written.

It is felt that the information and findings are of interest not only to the European Commission, but also to all of those who are involved in integration policies and practices across Europe and elsewhere.

Several individuals and institutions helped to realise the study. Gratitude is expressed to:
- the European Commission for the financial support that made this study possible
- the Working Partners in the participating countries who submitted country reports and supplied additional information
- the GION Research Institute of the University of Groningen in the Netherlands for their help in the data-analysis.

Jørgen Greve, Director

May 1998

1 Introduction

1.1 The study of the European Community

The report of the European Commission of 1992 forms the frame of reference for the findings and developments that are described in this report. The *Report of the Commission on the progress with regard to the implementation of the policy of school integration in the Member States (1988-1991)*, addresses quite a number of issues within the field of integration. The goal of that study was to monitor progress made with regard to school integration in the European Community since 1986, the date of the *Working paper of the Commission Services on the progress in implementing the policy of school integration of handicapped people (1986)*.

The main conclusions of the 1992 report are as follows:

- Compared with the situation in 1986 (the year of a Commission's document on the progress with regard to school integration in the European Community), the 1992 report showed that there was clear development in the member countries with respect to the legislation relating to integration. Some countries initiated efforts to allow more integration and others improved their still continuing process of promoting integration.
- There was wide diversity in the concepts that were applied in defining the target group for integration. Some countries described the target group in terms of type of disability; others adopted the concept of special educational needs. The report highlighted the problem of the involvement of other Ministries, such as Health or Social Affairs. It was argued that these authorities were often inclined to use medical concepts in describing the target group. Furthermore, the report criticised the lack of cohesion as a result of the involvement of different responsible authorities.
- The report estimated the percentage of disabled pupils in the Member States on about 2% of the overall population of school aged children. Of these, about one quarter followed education within the mainstream schools whilst about three quarters attended special schools. The report pointed to the necessity of comparing these figures with quantitative data of earlier years. However, the report argued that lack of data made a reliable estimate of the progress made

towards integration in a certain period impossible. Furthermore, where the number of pupils in special schools was generally well known, the number of pupils that were educated in integrated settings was hard to assess. At the same time it was unclear how many pupils with a disability did not make use of educational facilities at all. It was therefore not possible to present reliable data relating to numbers of pupils and their location and to determine precise costs concerning comparisons between mainstream and special education. Nevertheless, the report highlighted the usefulness of information on these topics and stressed the need for gathering additional reliable and valid data.

The study of the education systems in the Member States showed wide diversity in special education provision. There were countries where two separate systems existed - mainstream and special - and there were countries where all, or almost all, special facilities were located in the mainstream system.

The report questioned the necessity of a separate special school system in some countries. Even if the special system was characterised by high quality, the actual existence of two separate systems (mainstream and special) produced extra costs and resulted in disjointed organisation. This also enhanced the tendency of teachers in mainstream settings to refer pupils with difficulties in the direction of special provision where the facilities were perceived as being better. Serious concerns were expressed about the existence of two separate systems.

Amongst others, the following common trends were evident in the Member States:

- Most Member States accepted the idea of an individual education plan or programme (IEP). IEPs describe the adaptations required to the curriculum to meet individual needs and determine the goals that should be achieved by pupils. The IEP is reviewed and revised periodically.
- Several Member States questioned the concept of homogeneous grouping. This was seen to be incompatible with the need to handle more differences in the classroom: homogeneous grouping was considered a hindrance or barrier to integration. A need for more differentiated education was particularly identified as being required in the secondary education sector.
- In some Member States, the role of the special school was developed into that of a support centre, where only the most severely disabled would be placed and educated. The teachers of such support centres might also offer their expertise to the mainstream school system.

The report concludes that there was major progress in integration compared to the situation as described in the Commission document of 1986. There remained, however, a need to define the problem of integration in terms of meeting the needs of all pupils in mainstream schools. In other words, integration continued to require fundamental changes to be made to the curriculum.

In this present study, it is the aim to try and reveal whether there has been any further progress compared to the findings in 1992. Furthermore, it will be attempted to highlight common trends, central issues and current discussions relating to the whole topic of integration in the countries participating in this study.

1.2 The goal of the study

As previously indicated, the goal of this study is to reassess the situation of integration in the Member States compared with the findings as described in the EC document of 1992. Before doing so, some background comments have to be made.

Firstly, there are some methodological issues that arise in comparing this study's findings with those of the 1992-document; for example the countries in the sample described here are not the same as those in the sample of 1992. There is also the problem of the comparability of findings between countries. These and other methodological problems will be elaborated upon and further discussed in the next chapter.

Secondly, it should be noted that other organisations are currently working within the same field. The OECD/UNESCO/EUROSTAT special study on special educational needs, more or less addresses the same issues as covered here. That study attempts to explore the available educational statistics and related information relevant to special needs education. In doing so, the study addresses issues such as legislation, categorisation, definitions, costs and financing, number of students with special educational needs, provision, teacher training and so on.

Within the remit of the current work of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, relevant related topics are also being dealt with. Current on going studies include an investigation into the financing of special needs education (to be completed in 1998) and an examination of teacher support issues (also to be completed in 1998).

These studies may deal with different samples of countries to those reported as part of this study, however it remains the intention here to prevent unnecessary overlap with these studies. That means that this study report will mainly focus upon **qualitative trends in integration across Europe.** The study is oriented towards trends and developments in provision for pupils with special educational

needs in the European countries. Although some quantitative data is presented (number of pupils with special educational needs for example), the emphasis focuses upon the identifiable qualitative issues. The topics of teacher support (and teacher training) and financing will not be dealt with extensively here; readers are referred to the above mentioned forthcoming reports of the Agency and of OECD/UNESCO/EUROSTAT for more information relating to those issues.

Having stated the above, it should also be stressed that this study is **not focused upon describing or evaluating the quality of educational provision.** The method employed in this study does not allow conclusions relating to the effects or quality of education to be drawn. Other procedures and methodologies are more suitably equipped for assessing the quality of certain educational facilities. In other words, the approach taken here is not sufficient for presenting valid and reliable data concerning quality or outcomes of educational provision. The approach may, however, reveal common problems, developments, trends and central issues across the participating countries. Of course, data concerning the number of pupils that are integrated or segregated will be presented, but this data never implies value judgements regarding the quality of education being described.

In the next chapter, the framework of the study and the methodology employed are discussed. In Chapter Three, country descriptions are presented. In Chapter Four, a general overview is given of the different topics that form the basis of this study. Finally, in Chapter Five some recent developments and common trends are highlighted.

Those readers interested in descriptions of special needs education and related issues within certain countries, are directed particularly to Chapter Three. Readers who are interested in topics and trends across countries, are directed to Chapters Four and Five.

2 Framework and methodology

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the conceptual framework for the study is elaborated upon and the procedures and methodology clarified. The next sections firstly describe the general approach that is used in the study (2.2), then outline the content of the study and the issues that are addressed (2.3). Finally, (2.4) some methodological aspects are discussed.

2.2 General approach

The general approach used in this study is more or less the same as the one used in the earlier study of the Commission. It is also comparable with the methodology that is frequently used by other international organisations such as the OECD (see the OECD-CERI study on school integration). The procedure used was as follows:

- The European Agency secretariat constructed a questionnaire (see later for specific details)
- National co-ordinators, or country representatives, answered the questions by submitting thematic country-reports
- Central analysis and synthesis of information was undertaken by the secretariat
- During this procedure there was an ongoing interaction between staff and actors on the country level in order to facilitate the collection of additional information or necessary clarifications.

The national actors in the case of this specific project are the so-called Agency Working Partners. These Working Partners are national co-ordinators who analyse documents, gather data and consult with experts. In sum, they co-ordinated the data processing and analysis of information on the national level.

As a central part of the data collection procedure, the Agency hosted numerous joint meetings where staff and Working Partners co-operated and where close attention was paid to: clarifying concepts used in the questionnaires; the design of the study and to data gathering, data analysis and interpretation of the findings. The

aim of these meetings was to attempt to improve the methodological quality of the study.

This procedure thus has the same methodological characteristics, strengths and weaknesses as comparable models frequently used for similar international projects. Its main weakness is that the quality of the data depends heavily upon the quality of the material delivered by the Working Partners. The alternative, a more co-ordinated and central data collection method, guarantees more uniform methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. However, such a procedure would be more costly and time-consuming. The main advantage of the approach used here is that the Working Partners model can quickly take the specific context in a country into account and easily prevent misinterpretations of information.

Some restrictions to the scope and content of the study are important to mention here. A first necessary restriction is that of the decision to confine the study to the compulsory school age range. This is in line with the earlier study of the Commission and as such, the study does not consider themes or issues relating to pre-school education, early intervention, transition to the labour market and so forth. The main topic addressed is school integration and it was the aim to approach that issue in as broad a way as possible, but within the certain confines of compulsory school age limits.

As previously mentioned, the emphasis in this study focuses upon qualitative aspects of school integration and less upon quantitative items and issues. For those quantitative items, central data gathering and analysis procedures are more useful and valid. In addition, recent work (co-operation of the OECD, UNESCO and EUROSTAT) already focuses upon such statistical items. Nevertheless, in this study some attention is paid to the quantitative aspects of school integration. Other relevant issues such as financing of special educational needs, teacher support (and teacher training) are not dealt with extensively in this study. These themes are currently being addressed in other projects undertaken by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

2.3 Conceptual framework and questionnaire

The central aim of this study is to assess progress made in the process of integrating pupils with special educational needs in Europe. It is important to clarify the two key concepts used here: 'special education' and 'integration'. In some countries the concept of special education refers to a separate special education system. In others, the term special education refers to all forms of special support and teaching within separate and mainstream education. For the

purposes of this study, this latter interpretation best represents the development in most countries. Where the term special education is used, it should be seen within this broader context and definition of the term.

The concept of 'integration' can be interpreted as developing more and more into the concept 'inclusion'. The view held here is that the term 'inclusion' has wider meaning and application than the term 'integration'. Integration reflects attempts to place pupils with special educational needs in mainstream educational settings. Integration is often seen as reintegration after a period of segregation. Most authors now believe that integration is in the first place an educational reform issue. It is exactly at this point that the concept of integration shifts towards the concept of inclusion.

Accepting this distinction, the term integration is used here in describing the situation of children with special educational needs in the educational systems in the different European countries. Indeed, when using the term inclusion, an assessment of the quality of the curriculum, or of education in general, is needed. As such an assessment is beyond the scope and brief of this project, it is preferred not to use this concept, but to use the term integration.

In line with the earlier work of the Commission, the following topics are addressed in the study questionnaire (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire):

1 An overview of the state of the art of integration, integration policy and of legislation and regulations.
2 Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps, including
   - different categories
   - assessment procedures
   - referral and placement procedures
3 Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including information concerning:
   - numbers and types of segregated provision (special schools)
   - number and types of mainstream arrangements such as (part-time or full-time) special classes, resource rooms, visiting/peripatetic teachers
4 Number of pupils with special educational needs (in the compulsory school age range)
   - per type of provision
   - per category of special educational need
   - per age-group

5 Curriculum and teaching
   - the accessibility of the mainstream curriculum for pupils with special educational needs
   - type of adaptations (in terms of goals, organisation and content of the curriculum)
   - teacher training facilities for special educational needs education in the mainstream school
6 Special schools
   - the contribution of special schools to integration
   - their position in the integration process
   - the role of special teachers in supporting mainstream schools
7 Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration, such as:
   - attitudes of parents towards integration
   - the basis in society for integration
   - barriers to integration

Working Partners were asked to provide information on these topics. Whenever possible, recent research findings were taken into account and included in the reports.

2.4 Sample and analysis

The study sample consists of the following countries participating in the project:

Austria
Belgium
   Flemish Community
   French Community
Denmark
England and Wales
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Italy
The Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
Spain
Sweden

These countries are members of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. Ireland, Iceland and Luxembourg are also members of the Agency, but these countries could not submit a country report within the given time limits and conditions imposed for the project. Of the current Member States of the European Union, only Ireland and Luxembourg did not participate. Compared to the countries participating in the 1992 study of the Commission, Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden participated in this study and were, for obvious reasons, not included in the 1992 Commission study.

A further point regarding the sample is that this study report will show separate descriptions of the situation within Belgium: both the Flemish and the French Community submitted country reports. Finally, the data of the United Kingdom is restricted to a report of the situation in England and Wales only.

A full list of the Working Partners and country representatives of the Agency member countries is given in Appendix B.

The method of analysis used in the study is relatively straightforward: the country reports were analysed systematically in order to identify comparable information relating to the topics as described above. Some reports were very detailed, others fairly global. So, for some countries, the focus is upon the main »highlights« whilst for others, additional information was needed. Short (five page) country descriptions were created detailing the seven topics of the questionnaire. This procedure permits two different forms of data presentation: descriptions per country and descriptions per topic. This matrix-type approach, or model, forms the basis of the presentation of results in the next chapters.

The main question centres upon the comparison of the findings as gathered, with the results of the 1992 study of the Commission. In addition, comparisons between countries form the basis of this study's findings and conclusions. The issue of the comparability of the findings (between countries and between 1992 and 1998) is thus predominant in the study.

Pijl, *et al.* (1997) discuss the issue of comparability in their research into inclusive practices in different countries. In the last few years, a number of comparative studies have been conducted in which various aspects of integrative education have been described. Most of these studies are largely descriptive and take into account the (national) context in which the educational processes take place. Pijl *et al.* point out that it is difficult to draw general conclusions from this type of comparative research. Conditions often differ considerably. They conclude that practices in other countries may work in that particular context, but it is unlikely that these practices will work as well in a different context. Making use of

experiences other countries have in integration is very often not simply a matter of copying practices.

They also discuss other comparative methodologies. Comparative approaches are found in the 'Education at a glance' studies of the OECD, the IEA studies (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) and the NCEO studies (National Centre on Educational Outcomes). These studies focus on the outcomes of educational processes and try to relate outcomes to resources (input and context). In these studies, not only are general descriptions given of the educational systems in different countries or states, but also cross-country comparisons are made in terms of input, context and output variables. It is clear that these type of studies serve quite different goals in comparison to the goal of this study.

However, it should be made clear that comparative research does not end with the description of practices in other countries. In line with the position of Pijl *et al.*, it is argued here that comparative research should contribute to knowledge of the effects of different arrangements in education. As a result, in the following chapters, the study report will not only present country descriptions, but also make use of a more thematic approach. It is within this thematic approach where learning about integration processes becomes possible.

Finally, one of the key concerns of this study is to assess the state of the art of provision for pupils with special educational needs in Europe. A central topic within this study is to specify the number of pupils across different types of provision. This is a very complex issue however. Countries use different concepts and different ways of calculating numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The study attempts to unify (wherever possible) the data by presenting the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the different settings. This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of pupils with special educational needs by the *total number of pupils in the same age group*. This may result in some discrepancies with the figures in the country reports since the denominator of the ratio special educational needs/total population differs across countries. Some countries use only the number of pupils in the mainstream school as the denominator, others - and this is considered more accurate - use the total number of pupils in the denominator, thus including the number of pupils with special educational needs as well. It is this latter approach that is applied to the data analysis.

Comparability is still far from perfect. Firstly, the study does consider the number of children outside the educational system. Secondly, countries use

different age groups in this report, as a result of different compulsory school age ranges. Ideally, the given numbers and percentages should refer to the same age groups across countries. As pointed out earlier, this is beyond the goal (and conditions) of this study. In the OECD/UNESCO/EUROSTAT project it was attempted to overcome these and other problems concerning comparisons between countries by specifically addressing this issue.

In the analysis here, it is the aim to establish how many pupils with special educational needs are educated in segregated settings. The concept of segregated setting refers in this study to all educational arrangements where pupils are educated in separate groups without following the mainstream curriculum, alongside their peers with no special educational needs. This implies that in countries where the education of pupils with special educational needs is arranged through special classes or special groups, such provision is identified and labelled as a segregated provision if pupils are educated in such special groups for the greater part of the school day. This is, of course, arbitrary, as in some countries this education is explicitly labelled as taking place in mainstream education. It is however internationally accepted to reserve the term integration to all those educational settings where pupils with special educational needs engage with the curriculum in mainstream classes alongside peers with no special educational needs for the majority of their school day.

In the following chapters, segregated provision therefore refers to special schools and special classes where pupils are educated for the greater part of the school day.

3 Country descriptions

3.1 Introduction

In the next sections, the state of the art of special needs education in the participating countries is described. The descriptions are presented in the same, ordered way. For each country first the general integration policy is described, including the most important legislative information. Then, the current situation concerning definitions of special educational needs (categories) and assessment is discussed. Provision for pupils with special educational needs in each country is described as well as the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each country. The curriculum and teaching issues concerning special educational needs are then dealt with. Finally, additional topics are discussed such as the role of the special school, attitude of parents and the barriers to integration. In Chapter Four and Five a more thematically structured presentation of the data is given.

3.2 Austria

Integration policy

According to Austrian law, the task of special schools is to provide pupils with special educational needs with special education with reference to their disabilities and needs and to impart educational contents to them equivalent to the curricula of primary schools, general secondary schools and pre-vocational schools as far as possible. The claim for such an individual and differentiated education implies the establishment of different types of special schools within the compulsory school system and different curricula as far as is necessary. Different categories of disabilities correspond with different types of special schools. The structure of special schools shows some differences to mainstream education. The groups are smaller, 8 to 15 pupils instead of 30 at the most. Teachers have followed specialised training and hold specialist qualifications. Special schools have an autonomous curriculum that may be modified with reference to the special educational needs of the pupils.

Since 1981, there have been pilot projects to test different forms of integration and to gain experience with the aim of legalising integration within the mainstream school system. In 1993, the parliament passed the respective law making integration possible in primary schools. Parallel to the legalisation of integration within primary schools, the lower level of secondary schools have offered pilot-projects to test and gain experience with integration. The aim was the legalisation of integration in secondary schools before the deadline of 1997 to guarantee the continuity of integration in secondary schools to the pupils with special educational needs that started in mainstream primary schools in 1993. In December 1996, the parliament passed the respective law legalising the continuation of integration within the lower level of secondary schools. The deadline of 1997 raised some problems however. The experimental stage was too short, and the number of schools offering pilot projects was too small. In secondary schools, the co-operation between mainstream school teachers and support teachers is more complex than in primary education. The different subject matters are taught by different teachers, so the support teacher has to co-operate and plan lessons with several mainstream teachers.

Before 1993, special schools had been obligatory for pupils with certified special educational needs. Since the law of 1993, parents are allowed to choose between a mainstream primary school (integration) and a special school. Pupils with special educational needs can attend lessons in mainstream schools, or in

special schools. Integration policy differs in the Austrian provinces, although it is based on a law that is valid for all of Austria. The law demands attractive offers in both mainstream and special schools, making a choice by the parents possible. However, this demanded attractiveness depends upon the local situation, the deep-rooted infrastructure and the attitude of decision-makers towards integration.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

Austria distinguishes 10 categories of special educational needs:
children with learning difficulties
physically handicapped children
children with speech impairments
children with hearing impairments
deaf children
visually handicapped children
blind children
children with serious behavioural problems
severely and multiply handicapped children
children with health impairments

Assessment

As previously mentioned, prior to 1993 special schools had been obligatory for pupils with certified special educational needs. The entrance of a pupil into a special school was preceded by a decision of the district school board, either on request of the parents or on request of the head of the school. Before taking such a decision, the district board had to obtain the expert opinion of the head of the special school and, if necessary, of a school doctor and a school psychologist (only with the consent of the parents). An appeal against the decision of the district school board could be made at the provincial school board. This provincial school board could also order the submission of a psycho-pedagogical opinion. Since 1993, this procedure is still operational with a few modifications. The most important modification is the legal possibility of parents to choose either a special school or a mainstream school for their child with special educational needs. Other modifications are that parents have the possibility to present expert opinions themselves and that the district school board has to counsel the parents regarding the special educational needs, the possibilities within the school system and additional aids.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Austria has eight types of special schools

* special schools for children with learning difficulties
* special schools for physically handicapped children
* special schools for children with speech impairments
* special schools for hearing impaired and deaf children:
  education for these children was organised in two different types of special schools, but these two types are integrated into one for both disabilities
* special schools for visually handicapped or blind children:
  education for these children was organised in two different types of special schools, but these two types are integrated into one for both disabilities
* special schools for children with serious behavioural problems
* special schools for severely and multiply handicapped children
* special schools in hospitals.

A number of special schools (n = 205) are designated by the provincial school board as Centres of Special Education which have the task of providing and co-ordinating measures in the field of special education. This makes it possible that pupils in need of special education can also be taught in mainstream schools in the best possible way. The Centres of Special Education co-operate with school inspectors, other centres and institutions and compulsory schools in the area. The Centres provide and co-ordinate measures in the field of special education in compulsory schools including the collection of data concerning pupils with special educational needs, giving pedagogical and organisational advice, counselling parents and teachers, taking care of public relations, providing training opportunities and setting up and taking care of mainstream classes with integration.

Different staff are available for pupils with special educational needs: teachers that are qualified for special education work in special schools; additional staff for pupils with special educational needs and teachers who act as support for the classroom teacher in mainstream schools. Medical staff, therapists and nursing staff are employed wherever there is a need.

The *integration* of pupils with special educational needs can take different forms:

1. Mainstream class with full-time support
   In general, these classes consist of four to six disabled pupils (depending upon the category and the degree of disability) and 17 to 20 non-disabled pupils. The

class teacher is supported by a special teacher full time. The structure of this class is planned and decided by the district school board in co-operation with the head of the Centre of Special Education and the head of the school.

2. Mainstream classes with part-time support
   In such classes the number of disabled pupils is not enough to justify full-time support and the classroom teacher is supported part-time. The degree of this support depends on the number of disabled pupils, the category and the degree of disability and the local situation. The experience is that it is very difficult to integrate just one pupil with special educational needs in a class because the teacher is supported by a special teacher on an average of four lessons a week. In this case, the success of integration depends upon the skills of mainstream teachers. The question is whether this form of integration is able to meet all educational needs of pupils with special educational needs.
3. Co-operation classes
   Co-operation classes are situated within a mainstream school or at least in the same building. These classes have the structure of a special class and pupils are taught by a special teacher. The law offers these pupils the possibility to attend lessons in the mainstream class, when they are able to follow the mainstream curriculum. In practice most of these pupils follow parts of the curriculum in the mainstream class. The problem, however, is that these pupils are constantly moving class location without 'feeling at home' anywhere.

Long before integration in mainstream schools was introduced, special schools provided mainstream schools with specialists in a special mobile service offering provision for pupils with special educational needs within or outside of the classroom. This special mobile service is still available.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In Austria about 670,000 pupils in the compulsory age range attended in 1995/1996 mainstream and special education:

total number pupils primary schools	382,901
total number pupils in secondary schools	267,093
total number in special schools	18,433 (2.76%)
total number of pupils registered as SEN	24,725 (3.70%)

Pupils with special educational needs in special schools (1995/96)

total number	18,433 (= 2.76% of the total school population)
of which in	
schools for learning disabilities	59.0%
schools for physically handicapped	4.9%
schools for speech impaired	2.0%
schools for hearing impaired	1.1%
schools for deaf	1.6%
schools for visually handicapped	1.0%
schools for blind	0.5%
schools for multiply handicapped	2.1%
schools for severely handicapped	17.4%
schools in hospitals	5.2%

Most pupils with special educational needs follow special education at the secondary school level:

SEN in primary level	7,388 (40%)
SEN in upper level	11,045 (60%)

Pupils with SEN in mainstream schools:

N = 6,292 (0.9% of total school population)

of which in	
primary schools	4,533 (1.2%)
secondary schools	1,759 (0.6%)

There are no statistics available regarding the number and types of integration arrangements. In the rural areas, mainstream classes with part-time support are predominant in relation to mainstream classes with full-time support because it is difficult to create a concentration of pupils with special educational needs. The statistics about pupils with special educational needs integrated into mainstream secondary education are based on the pilot-projects.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

In primary education, the curriculum constitutes a framework that offers teachers the opportunity to adapt and react to individual needs. In secondary education, the

curriculum contains codification of educational subject matter and content in a fixed amount and within a precisely defined sequence.

The accessibility of the mainstream curriculum of the different compulsory schools depends upon the category and the degree of the disability. The choice of a curriculum for a pupil with special educational needs must always correspond with the needs and the ability of that pupil. That means that the pupil may be instructed in particular subjects according to different curricula.

According to the new law, physically handicapped, visually handicapped, and hearing impaired children may be educated and instructed according to an adapted curriculum with reference to their disability, or even be exempted from a subject if they cannot follow the instruction because of their specific disability.

Teacher training

Teachers for special education, graduate from the 3-year initial special teacher training at the teacher training college; the qualification emphasises the fields of learning disabilities and severely and multiple handicapped support. This teacher training is a special separate track and compulsory for all special teachers. The certificate authorises them to work in a special school, or as a support teacher in mainstream classes. In addition, in-service teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges offer courses for further special qualifications with reference to the different categories of disabilities in special schools, authorising teachers to work at the respective special schools, or in a mobile special service.

Teacher training colleges do not offer special initial training for a support teacher in mainstream classes, but emphasise this particular educational field within the general frame of their curriculum. Most of the special training programmes in the area of integration, are offered by in-service teacher training colleges. In Austria, in-service training is optional and offered to teachers according to their needs.

The in-service training centre organises training units in co-operation with the district school board and the provincial school board. In-service training may be organised for all teachers in one school, for teachers in a certain region, for all teachers in a federal province, or nation-wide. Since in-service teacher training colleges are flexible in adapting their programme to current developments, integration policy has greatly influenced their courses. Teacher training colleges are committed to a national curriculum, which makes adaptations more time-consuming.

Teacher attitudes

In primary education, the attitudes of teachers towards integrated pupils with special educational needs are positive. Evaluation showed that most teachers felt competent enough for the new area of responsibility after a short time and that they were able to take up the challenge and create something positive. In secondary education, the experience with integration is restricted to schools and teachers that participated in pilot projects. These teachers integrated pupils with special educational needs voluntarily, which implies a positive attitude towards integration. However, the majority of teachers of secondary schools remain sceptical about integration. Their reservations do not concern the pupils with special educational needs, but the system. Teachers in general secondary schools are deluged with integration tasks and some do not understand why they should integrate pupils with special educational needs in addition to the weaker population they already have.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

New roles of special schools

Since 1993, 205 special schools have become centres of special education, and thus have extended their responsibility to providing and co-ordinating measures in special education in other types of schools. Many special schools see it as a challenge that other schools are allowed to provide special education too and try to offer an attractive alternative.

Experience shows that special schoolteachers can cope with these new roles.

Attitude of parents

The attitudes of parents towards integration differ considerably and depends amongst other factors upon the special educational needs of their child, the educational possibilities being offered, the centre of special education, the teachers and personal experiences. In general, there is a positive basis for integration. Experience shows that a positive basis for integration depends on the level of information, knowledge and personal experience. Parents more or less do not believe that secondary schools are able to meet all the needs of their disabled children to the same extent as primary schools do, especially with regards to vocational training. A majority of parents think integration in mainstream classes is a good alternative for special education and they more and more appreciate the legal possibility to choose which school their child attends.

Barriers to integration

A barrier to integration can be that of the local situation being incompatible with the needs of a pupil. The reality of integration practice shows further that the integration of one or two disabled pupils with support by the hour does not sufficiently meet the needs of the pupils and the classroom teacher. Furthermore, in rural counties it is difficult to concentrate the numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In some provinces the demand for specialists is higher than the supply.

Since 1993, the number of pupils with special educational needs has increased. The most obvious reason for this is the connection between the assessment procedure and the funding system. Sometimes, pupils that do not have special educational needs in the strict sense of the law do receive financial support. As a result of the fact that the total budget is limited, this increased demand will diminish the support for pupils with real special educational needs.

3.3 Belgium

3.3.1 Flemish Community

Integration policy

Flanders has a long history of a separated system of special schools. Since 1970, legislation for mainstream and special education has been separate. The legal principle of integration, however, was included in the 1970 law on special and integrated education. The recent law of February 1997 on primary education, incorporates mainstream and special primary education in the same legal framework, respecting the specific characteristics of special education. The principle of integration is further specified in the law. Mainstream primary schools should provide pupils with an uninterrupted learning process and are responsible for the education of all pupils of the intended age group, guiding as many pupils as possible by continuous attention and support.

Special primary education is described as education that offers adapted education, care and therapy to pupils whose personal development cannot be ensured by mainstream education on a temporary or permanent basis. As pointed out, the new law also describes integrated primary education. Integrated primary education is a collaborative link between mainstream and special primary education. It is the intention to enable pupils with a disability and/or learning or educational difficulties to participate in courses and activities in a mainstream school, temporarily or permanently, completely or partially with help from a special school, that receives additional resources to do so. Finally, the law creates possibilities for schools to work together by exchanging teacher hours.

Secondary education still has separate legislation for mainstream and special education. It is the aim of the minister to have an integrated legislation on secondary education in the near future.

Although there is a clear discussion about integration, inclusion and co-operation between mainstream and special schools at the level of educational advisory councils and schools, Flanders still has many special schools that function separately from mainstream schools.

Integrated education started on an experimental basis in 1980. In 1983, it was officially organised for pupils with physical, visual, or hearing impairments that had a good chance of success in mainstream education provided that they received some additional educational and/or paramedical support. With the circular of 1994, the integration policy shows the following innovations:

- extension to all types of special education
- different forms of integrated education: not only full-time, but also temporary and partial integration is possible
- extension to the level of higher education
- the acceptance of the 'equivalence principle': pupils with special educational needs can graduate from a different programme by replacing lessons approved by the inspector
- differentiation of the nature and amount of additional aid depending upon the nature and seriousness of the pupil's disability.

In July 1996, research findings were reported concerning integrated education. An important result was that the special education teacher spends a lot of time helping the pupil with the subject matters and far less attention is paid to helping the mainstream teacher in dealing with pupils with special educational needs. The report also showed that there is too little attention paid to socio-emotional aspects of integration. Further, the study showed a need for a different system of financing based on the specific needs of the pupils, the need for more facilities for consultation and support and a need for in-service training.

Since the school year 1993/94, the Flemish minister of education has set up a programme to intensify the provision in mainstream nursery and primary schools. This concerns an increase in the attention paid by schools to differences amongst pupils with regard to learning possibilities and learning aspirations in terms of aptitude, background, age and gender. The aim is to achieve a better approach to learning problems and a reduction of the number of pupils who repeat a year.

The priorities of the project are:
- introduction or optimising a pupil monitoring system;
- optimising the working methods in the classroom;
- optimising the co-operation in the school;
- optimising the co-operation with parents;
- co-operation with the guidance centre;
- co-operation with a special school (voluntary, but with the possibility to exchange teacher hours from the mainstream to the special school to get weekly support);
- an engagement to ask for guidance and in-service training.

The ultimate goal is the enhancement of the competence of classroom teachers in dealing with pupils with special educational needs. The project is based on

conditional financing, schools receive additional resources on the basis of a clear project approach for the target group. In addition to this project, five experimental projects have been set up concerning the co-operation between one special school and at least four mainstream schools. Besides these official initiatives some mainstream and special schools have themselves initiated different ways of co-operation.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The special education system is meant for children and young people who need special education because of their pedagogical needs and possibilities. Both the new integrated law for primary education and the old separate law for secondary special education divide special education into eight types or pedagogical settings. Each type is characterised by its own target objective, didactic content, teaching methods and organisation and is adapted to the specific educational needs of the pupils for whom it is intended.

Type 1: is intended for pupils with a mild mental retardation. This type is not organised at the level of the nursery school.

Type 2: is intended for pupils with a moderate or severe mental retardation.

Type 3: is intended for pupils with severe emotional and/or behavioural problems.

Type 4: is intended for pupils with a physical handicap.

Type 5: is intended for pupils with severe health problems or long term illness.

Type 6: is intended for pupils with a visual handicap.

Type 7: is intended for pupils with a hearing problem.

Type 8: is intended for pupils with severe learning problems that cannot be explained by a mental disorder. This type is not organised at the secondary school level.

Regardless of the types of special education, secondary education is divided into four educational tracks that differ mainly in the aims of education.

The first track aims at contributing to an active and worthwhile life for those who are unable to take part in active work life even in a sheltered workshop, because of the seriousness of their handicap. Pupils are taught to live as independently as possible in a sheltered living environment (e.g. a day-centre or an activity centre). This track can be organised for types of special education 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7, and lasts for at least four years.

Track two can be organised for the same types of special education. In addition

to general and social learning, it also provides work training in order to enable pupils to integrate into a sheltered/protected work environment. The training lasts for at least four years and is divided in two phases. Vocational training courses outside the school are also organised.

Track three provides pupils with general and social training plus vocational training. It can be organised for types of special education 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7. The pupils are prepared for integration into a normal employment and living environment. The training is comparable with standard vocational education and lasts five years.

Track four provides secondary education similar to the general, technical, vocational, or an artistic curriculum of mainstream full-time secondary education and is also structured in the same way. The pupils follow the programme of mainstream education under the condition that the educational methods are provided which are adapted to their special educational needs or that the time to acquire the programme can be extended as required.

Assessment

In principle, special education is only considered for pupils whose needs are insufficiently catered for by the education resources that are available within the mainstream school. For the referral of a pupil to special education, two documents from a guidance centre (a psycho-medical-social centre) are needed. The first document is a certificate stating that the pupil may benefit from special education, indicating the type, the level, and if appropriate the form of special secondary education the pupil needs. The second document justifies this certificate, and contains a synthesis of the psychological, medical, social, and pedagogical examination. This multidisciplinary report must conclude that a pupil has a real need to attend a special school. The guidance centre plays mainly an advisory role. The parents receive the certificate, which allows them to enrol their child in a school of their choice, which organises the specific type of special education, the child needs. Special education is a right, never an obligation. The certificate is returned to the parents when their child leaves the school.

A copy of the report is sent to the school. This report, together with the findings of the school team itself, allows the school team to direct the pupils towards the most suitable group, to set the objectives to be attained, and to work out an individual educational plan corresponding to the pupils needs with the help of the guidance centre. In specific cases a supplementary advice can be asked from the Consultative Commission for Special Education.

Admission to integrated education requires a certificate of acceptance, just as admission to special education. This certificate refers to an integration plan. This integration plan is the result of consultation among all parties involved: the pupil or his or her parents, the mainstream school, the school for special education, and the counselling centres.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

In total, Flanders has 87 special nursery schools, 189 special primary schools, and 113 special secondary schools. The special schools are categorised according to the different types of special educational needs as described before. In Flanders there are no part-time or full-time special classes. Most mainstream primary schools (almost 65%) have a remedial teacher.

Within the framework of integrated education, specialist teachers and other professionals come into mainstream schools to help pupils. In the school year 1996/97, 848 mainstream primary and secondary schools were involved and 88 special primary and secondary schools. As part of the project that is focussed on increasing the provision within mainstream schools, 553 nursery schools (26.3% of all nursery schools) and 673 (30.8%) primary schools participated in the same school year.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

Currently, in Flanders 3.5% of all pupils in the compulsory age range are registered as having special educational needs. In the last years the percentage of pupils in separate special schools grew steadily. In 1985 the percentage was below 3% and in 1990 about 3%.

Of the 3.5% that are now registered as pupils with special educational needs, 3.4% are placed in separate special education settings and 0.1% are integrated in mainstream schools (1996/97). On the level of the nursery school the percentage of children in separate special schools is about 0.7%, on the primary level 5% and on the secondary level 3.3%. Furthermore these percentages vary according to age group. For example, more than 6% of the 11-years-old are educated in special schools.

The numbers of pupils in special schools are given in the next table.

	nursery school	primary school	secondary school
mild mental retardation	-	9,505	10,257
moderate/severe mental retardation	917	2,440	3,097
severe emotional/behavioural problems	120	966	780
physical handicap	244	684	868
severe health problems or illness	139	188	151
visual handicap	42	127	223
hearing problem	266	355	230
severe learning disabilities	-	7,763	-
total	1,728	22,028	15,606
number of pupils in mainstream schools	251,257	417,369	453,136

The following table presents the numbers of pupils registered with special educational needs that are integrated in mainstream schools (1996/97).

	nursery school	primary school	secondary school
mild mental retardation	-	1	-
moderate/severe mental retardation	17	-	-
severe emotional/behavioural problems	-	5	35
physical handicap	158	136	81
severe health problems or illness	-	-	-
visual handicap	58	88	75
hearing problem	37	83	113
severe learning disabilities	-	108	-
total	270	421	304

Curriculum and teaching

In general, the curriculum applies to all pupils. Until now, pupils with special educational needs that are integrated in mainstream schools are supposed to follow the mainstream curriculum. However, legislation has created the possibility to adjust the curriculum. As the Flemish Department of Education encourages the co-operation of special schools and mainstream schools, it is possible for pupils with special educational needs to benefit from an adapted individual learning

programme within the context of the mainstream school. However, practice shows that in general the same methods and materials are used. The main problem is that pupils with special educational needs in general have to follow the compulsory mainstream curriculum; schools do not seem to consider that they could adapt the curriculum to the pupil, taking into account his or her possibilities and weak spots. Therefore, the special educational needs teacher has to focus on remedial teaching for the pupil instead of supporting teachers or school teams in working with pupils with special educational needs.

When the report of a guidance centre concludes that a pupil should attend a special school, the special school sets the objectives to be attained and works out an individual educational plan corresponding to the pupil's needs with the help of the guidance centre. For now the development of a pupil-adapted individual learning programme still remains the task of the special schools.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools and integration

As a result of the policy towards more integration, special schools are uncertain about their future role and position and sometimes feel even threatened by this development. Some special schools however, are convinced that a further growth of the separate system cannot go on and they search for ways to work together with mainstream provision. Other schools refuse to take part in co-operation and think it may be the beginning of the end.

The current organisation of integrated education poses no direct threat to the special education system. Special schools get additional resources, while in the mainstream schools the pupils with special educational needs count in the same way as any other pupil. Special teachers support mainstream schools within the framework of integrated education, extending care and the pilot projects concerning co-operation between special and mainstream primary schools. The aim is that special teachers visit mainstream schools to stimulate the self-activation of the school. However, in practice, special teachers are often seen as an additional remedial teacher, who should bring solutions for individual problems of pupils. They are not perceived as a support teacher that could contribute to the change of the way of teaching and organising.

Barriers to integration

Barriers to integration focus mainly upon the tradition of separated special

education that makes a fundamental change in thinking about special educational needs necessary. In addition, the way special needs education is financed has to be reconsidered. At the moment most additional resources for special educational needs are only available in a segregated situation, the special schools.

Role of the parents

The 1997 law on primary education describes the right of parents to choose between a special school (though a certificate is needed) or a mainstream school. Special education is a right, never an obligation.

There are strong parental organisations that favour integration. They take initiatives to achieve more integrated education for their handicapped children (e.g. children with Down's syndrome). Furthermore, as parents of children with special educational needs want to contribute more actively to education, schools have to reconsider their role. They need to inform parents and treat them as equal partners in education. Especially in the process of the (individual) planning, parents can have a significant contribution in terms of defining objectives and to the educational planning itself. In special schools parents are indeed more and more involved in the development and evaluation of the individual education plan for their child. Also, within the context of integrated education, parents are one of the five participants that make decisions about the content of the individual integration plan (in co-operation with the mainstream school, the special school and the school guidance centres).

An evaluation of integrated education revealed that parents often have been the initiators of integrated education. However, in general the participation in the discussion of integration is restricted to the higher social classes. There is a greater proportion of parents from higher social classes whose children participate in integrated education, compared to a greater participation of lower social classes in special schools.

Finally, there is a certain pressure from parents to increase educational output in terms of higher achievements. This pressure results in a decrease of the possibilities of integration of the pupils with lower achievements.

3.3.2 French Community

Integration policy

Of course, most of the information as presented in the preceding section (Flanders) also holds true for the French part of Belgium. There are eight types of special schools and the special education provision is concentrated in separate special schools. The special school provides education for pupils who cannot receive education in mainstream schools. Since 1986, Belgium has had a law regarding integration and this law describes two integration models. The first model concerns special schools for physically handicapped, blind and for deaf pupils. Pupils with these problems must be able to attend lessons in mainstream schools and obtain a certificate. Pupils stay on the roll of the mainstream school, without the label of being a pupil of a special school, but they can use the free bus that is organised for the special school. The pupils follow mainstream education full-time with four hours support per pupil from a teacher of a special school. The initiative to integrate a certain pupil may come from the team of the special school, the association that guides the pupil during school time (Psycho-medical-social centre for the special schools, or PMSS; in Belgium, next to these PMSS there are also PMS for the support of mainstream schools), the parents of the child, or the pupil themselves when s/he is older than 18 years old.

The second integration model concerns all other types of special schools. Here, pupils remain on the roll of the special school, but receive education in a mainstream school with help from the special school (psychological, educational, and/or therapeutic support). The integration can be part-time; the pupil spends part of the time in a mainstream school and the other part in a special school. The integration can also be full-time (with support of a special school), temporary, individual or collective (a group that is integrated).

The mainstream school must provide instruction adapted to the needs and possibilities of the pupil. The integration can be organised at nursery, primary and secondary school level and can also be organised between two different types of special schools. The decision is taken by the team of the school and the PMSS together with the parents and the head of the mainstream school. A protocol describes this decision and the agreement of all partners (of the special and the mainstream school), the complete integration project with all modalities and the contact between the two schools. This report is sent to the Inspectorate who is responsible for the assessment. Each partner can decide to stop the integration, after notifying the Inspectorate.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The French Community organises special education in the same way as Flanders. There are eight types of special educational needs:

Type 1: is intended for pupils with a mild mental retardation.
Type 2: is intended for pupils with a moderate or severe mental retardation.
Type 3: is intended for pupils with severe emotional and/or behavioural problems.
Type 4: is intended for pupils with a physical handicap.
Type 5: is intended for pupils who have to be in a hospital or another medical institution for a longer period of time.
Type 6: is intended for pupils with a visual handicap.
Type 7: is intended for pupils with an hearing problem.
Type 8: is intended for pupils with learning disabilities

Assessment

The problem of a pupil can be first recognised by the parents, the PMS that work with mainstream schools, the teacher, or the team of the mainstream school. As the next step, the pupil is tested in the PMS centre. The centre gives the parents advice about the most appropriate school for their child. The parents are free to choose a mainstream or a special school. When they want their child to stay in a mainstream school, the child receives no special help. When the parents decide to follow the advice of the PMS, the pupil is obliged to attend the kind of teaching the PMS considers being the most appropriate. The development of the pupil in a special school is monitored by the PMSS centre. If necessary, the team of the school and the PMSS centre can decide to change the kind of teaching. The pupil can leave the special school and return to a mainstream school every year in September. This is not part of an integration process; the child becomes a mainstream pupil again and no longer receives help of the special school.

If necessary, a pupil of six years old can stay one or two years longer in the nursery special school after a decision of the school team and the PMSS. A pupil of 12 years old can go to a secondary special school, to a mainstream secondary school, or stay in the primary special school for one or two years. The school team and the PMSS make this decision together with the parents. The pupil can stay in a special school until the age of 21.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Just like Flanders, the French Community of Belgium has a separated system for

special schools and mainstream schools (see the preceding section for Flanders). Furthermore, special support is also possible within the mainstream schools (see preceding section). The special school supports integrated pupils with special educational needs and also the team of a mainstream school. A teacher of a special school co-ordinates the intervention of the team. This teacher supports the integrated pupils who are still on the roll of the special school and other pupils that need help. The number of professionals from special schools that work in an integration project is calculated by the special school in the usual way. However, the amount of time the teacher spends on helping the pupils is flexible.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

The following table contains the numbers of pupils with special educational needs across the different categories (in 1991-1992). In that year a total of almost 26,000 children received special education within a special school.

Number of pupils in special schools (1991/92)

	nursery school	primary school	secondary school
mild mental handicap	-	2,955	7,268
moderate/severe mental handicap	238	1,334	1,905
serious emotional and behavioural problems	76	1,631	2,431
physical handicap	164	588	682
hospital/medical institution	226	466	88
visual handicap	30	122	156
auditory problem	99	236	222
specific learning disabilities	-	4,879	-
total	883	12,211	12,752

In 1994/1995 the number of pupils in special education was 26,887. This is about 3.2% of the total population of the same age group. On the nursery level, the percentage is about 0.6%, on the primary level 4.1% and on the secondary level about 3.7%. These percentages are based upon the data presented in the table below.

Number of pupils in mainstream and special schools (1994/95)

	mainstream schools	special schools
nursery school	170,207	957
primary school	306,566	12,989
secondary school	336,229	12,941
total	813,002	26,887

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

There are a lot of projects concerning integration. Several mainstream schools are preparing for integration and have started a project called 'Successful School'. Pupils and teachers work in multi-aged groups two or three times a week. This way of teaching helps fight resistance to integration and takes differences between pupils into account. The Inspectorate is responsible for the assessment of these projects.

3.4 Denmark

Integration policy

In August 1994, a new act on the 'Folkeskole' (primary and lower secondary schools) came into force. This act is the third and final stage in an extensive reform of both the government and the content of the 'Folkeskole'. The crucial innovation is in the organisation of the teaching content and in the improvement of the methods used for the evaluation of the benefit and the effect of teaching for and upon pupils. Another innovation is the provision that teaching individual subjects shall interact with teaching interdisciplinary topics and problems. The comprehensive concept enables pupils to remain in the same group with the same classmates from the 1st to the 9th form, sharing the same experiences with peers from different backgrounds and covering the whole range of abilities.

A fundamental principle of Danish educational policy is that everyone should have the same access to education and training that is basically free of charge from the time a child is five or six years old. All pupils are entitled to instruction that is adapted to their situation, the possibilities and the needs of the individual pupils.

The purpose of special education and other special-pedagogic assistance is to encourage the development of pupils with special educational needs in accordance with the guidelines, which are stated in the Provision of Purpose in the Act of the 'Folkeskole'. It must be ensured that pupils leave school with a basis for further education or employment.

The Danish government sets up the act, the rules, the goals, and the frames for education. The local school authorities are responsible for the education of all pupils. The responsibility for the expenses for special education and other special educational assistance lies with the local council (the municipality), except for the expenses for pupils with extensive needs or support (6,000, or approximately 1% in 1995/96). The expenses for these pupils must be paid by the county council, except for a certain rate-amount that must be paid by the pupil's local council.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

In Denmark, many attempts have been made to define special education. This is a difficult task, because the understanding of special education varies over counties and because this may lead to mixing content, structure and philosophy which has a blurring effect upon the distinctions. In recent years efforts have been made to define the concept on the basis of the objective of a school for all. Special education constitutes the potential of the school to support pupils whose needs are

not fully satisfied in the mainstream education process. However, special education is not supposed to be an alternative, which exempts the pupils from the general provision. The goals of education apply to all pupils, but pupils can follow different tracks to get as close to these goals as possible.

Special education and other special-pedagogical assistance is given to pupils, whose development requires special consideration or support, which cannot be given within the framework of mainstream education. These measures of special education must be initiated as early as possible, as soon as it is obvious that a child's normal development is at stake.

Assessment

If it is presumed that a pupil needs special education, or if the pupil's schooling causes concern in other respects, the pupil can be recommended for a pedagogical-psychological assessment. This recommendation is made by the class teacher, or the school health service, but the parents and the head of the school can also ask for an assessment. After consulting the parents, the head of the school sends the recommendation to the Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office. This office assesses whether the pupil has a need for special education or other special-pedagogical assistance. The office may discuss the pupil's situation with teachers or others who forwarded the recommendation and uses the information to make proposals concerning arrangements that are considered appropriate.

When the Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office assesses a special need, a report is written. The parents must be informed about the content of the report. A recommendation for special needs education is given after consultation with the parents. The decision to start with special education, or other special-pedagogical assistance is made by the school head. Only with strong arguments, the office or the school head can overrule the parents when they do not agree with the need for special education for their child.

The Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office monitors the development of pupils who are referred to special education. At least once a year, the office decides to continue, alter or stop the special education.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Special education can be arranged in different ways:

1. the pupil remains in a mainstream school class
   a) and receive special education in one or more subjects as a supplement to the general teaching

b) and receive special education that substitutes the pupil's participation in the normal education in one or more subjects.

2. the pupil's membership of a mainstream school class stops, the entire education is given in a special class either within a mainstream school or within a special school
3. the pupil is a member of either a mainstream school class or a special class, but receives education in both types of classes.

Special classes exist for pupils with mental retardation, dyslexia, a visual handicap, hearing problems and for pupils with a physical handicap.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In Denmark, approximately 75,000, or 12 -13% of the total number of pupils in primary and lower secondary education, receive special instruction for shorter or longer periods of a school year. Of these, 10,000 pupils are educated in separate settings, 6,000 attend special classes in mainstream schools, while 4,000 pupils attend special schools. The percentage of pupils in segregated provision is about 1.7%: approximately 0.7% in special schools and 1% in special classes in mainstream schools.

The 'raw' numbers are:

number of pupils in 'Folkeskole'	600,000
number of pupils in special classes/schools	10,300

Curriculum and teaching

The Ministry of Education publishes guidelines for the subjects of the curriculum. These guidelines have the form of a recommendation and are not mandatory for the local school administrators. Schools are allowed to draw up their own curriculum as long as this curriculum is in line with the aims and proficiency areas that are laid down by the Ministry. However, nearly all schools choose to use the national guidelines as their curricula. For special classes and special schools special timetables are developed. It is also permitted to construct special curricula.

Special Education and other special-pedagogic assistance is comprised of:

- Education focusing upon the subjects of the 'Folkeskole', prepared with particular consideration of the learning needs of the pupils in question.
- Education and training in ways of functioning and working methods that help

or limit the effects of psychological, physical or sensory difficulties.
- Special-pedagogic advice to parents, teachers and other persons who have an important contribution to the development of the pupil.
- Special teaching materials and technical aids that are necessary for teaching the pupils
- Individual assistance to help the pupils overcome practical difficulties related with schooling.

The Royal Danish School for Educational Studies provides teacher training facilities for special needs education in mainstream schools and special schools. It is more and more a trend in Denmark to organise local courses in general school development.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

The most representative parental influence on school and education is stated in legislation regarding the administration of the school. Each school has its own school board that normally consists of five or seven parents, two teachers, two pupils, and the head of the school. The parents in the school board are elected by the parents of pupils attending the school. Thus parents have a majority on the school board, which is entitled to make the overall decisions about the school. In principle, the choice of school placement is binding, but parents are entitled to a re-evaluation at least once a year. The main principle in the Danish 'Folkeskole' is that special pedagogical assistance cannot be prepared, decided or carried out without the agreement of the child's parents.

Everybody agrees with the official policy: a school for all. Neither parents nor politicians discuss integration. Everybody favours integration of special education. However, in school practice, more segregated forms may develop within the integrated model.

3.5 England and Wales

Integration policy

The present position concerning special needs provision is grounded in the Education Acts of 1981, 1993 and 1996. The expectation is that a pupil will attend a mainstream school if this is compatible with the pupil receiving the special educational provision required, the provision of sufficient education for other pupils, the resources being used efficiently and the wishes of the parents. The basic approach is that a special school place is only considered after an mainstream school place has been found inappropriate.

All local education authorities (LEAs) are formally committed to integration, but their methods of implementing the policy vary according to local circumstances.

The relatively well-established commitment to integration has been affected by the Educational Reform Act of 1988 and subsequent developments:

* A National Curriculum was designed to apply to all pupils, regardless of their learning difficulties.
* The resourcing of education was changed. Most of the education budgets of local authorities are delegated to schools who may use them as they wish, subject to statutory obligations.
* Area (local authority) policies are in decline as schools have gained a greater degree of autonomy.
* The results of National Curriculum assessment and public examinations are published in league tables.
* The right of parents to choose the school their child attends has been extended to parents of children with special educational needs.
* There's a growing interest in the school improvement and school effectiveness movement.
* The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs is implemented.

These developments can favour or impede integration according to how they are interpreted. For example, parents may choose mainstream or special schools for their child, schools may focus on those pupils who will make a difference to the 'league tables' results, schools may spend more or less than their nominal allowance for special education and so forth.

Studies of integration mostly focus on individual pupils or individual schools

and on the degree of functional integration and how this is achieved within different local policy frameworks. Less attention is given to long-term evaluation of the effect of different patterns of schooling on the young people involved and wide-scale monitoring of progress made by individual pupils under different arrangements.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The Education Act 1993 states that a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child has a learning difficulty if he or she:

* has a significant greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children at the same age
* has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority
* is under five and falls within the first two definitions above or would do if special educational provision was not made for the child.

Special educational provision means for a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the child's age and for a child under two, educational provision of any kind.

The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DFE, 1994) recognises needs in eight categories, learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, physical difficulties, hearing difficulties, visual difficulties, speech and language difficulties and medical conditions. These categories are not mutually exclusive: merely a guide to the identification and assessment of difficulties in learning and giving the opportunity for a broad description of the manifestation of difficulties in each of the categories. One of the criteria of need is failure to perform within the national curriculum.

Assessment

The Code of Practice recommends a five staged model of assessing special educational needs. The stages represent an ever-widening circle of support. In the first stage, the mainstream class teacher identifies or registers a pupil's special educational needs and takes action after consultation with the school's special educational need co-ordinator (SENCO). In stage two, the SENCO takes

responsibility for gathering information and for co-ordinating the pupil's special educational needs, in collaboration with the pupil's mainstream teacher. In the third stage, the SENCO and the mainstream teacher are supported by specialists external to the school. In step four, the local educational authority considers the need for statutory assessment and makes a multidisciplinary assessment, if appropriate. In the final stage, the LEA considers the need for a statement of special educational needs and, if appropriate, draws up a statement.

Assessment is perceived as a continuous and flexible process in which regular monitoring, review and evaluation are required. Both parents and pupils are expected to be involved in all decision-making. Further, the Code of Practice stresses that early intervention is crucial, that needs may be influenced by school characteristics, that assessment should include all available information, that assessment instruments and procedures should be culturally neutral and that multi-professional agencies should collaborate.

In general, emotional and behavioural difficulties and moderate learning difficulties tend to be the two largest categories of need, with specific learning difficulties an increasingly identified need.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

In England and Wales, a continuum of provision exists implying an increasing degree of speciality and distance from the environments in which the majority of children are educated. The following settings can be distinguished:

1. the environment of the mainstream classroom
2. a combination of the mainstream classroom environment and a special setting within a mainstream school
3. a combination of the mainstream classroom and a special setting outside a mainstream school
4. a special setting inside a mainstream school such as a unit or special class
5. a special setting outside a mainstream school such as a day special unit or school
6. a special residential setting

According to recent statistics, there are about 1,400 special schools in England, of which almost 1,200 are 'Local Authority maintained' schools, 116 independent (private) schools, 72 non-maintained (run by voluntary organisations) special schools and almost 20 'Grant maintained' special schools (they receive a budget directly from the government). There are no national statistics on the number of

special units attached to mainstream schools, or special classes within mainstream schools.

There are peripatetic teachers working in mainstream schools, but there is no data available yet concerning the position and the number of these teachers.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

Concerning the numbers of pupils identified as having special educational needs in England and Wales, one can focus on the number of pupils with statements (for the more severe needs) or upon the numbers of pupils who are on the Register of Special Educational Needs. Concerning the statemented pupils, England and Wales do not collect data about the number of pupils with special educational needs linked with age-group, type of provision and category of special need nationally. It is only possible to give national statistics for pupils with statements.

The overall figure (1996) for pupils with statements in England (only) is about 2.8% of the school age population. In 1991 about 2% of all children were statemented.

At January 1996, 56% of the pupils with statements were placed in mainstream schools. The percentage of pupils in special school ranged from 0.2% to 2.4% of the school age population across LEAs.

Since 1996, figures for pupils on mainstream schools' special educational needs register' are returned to the government annually, but the interpretation of these figures is difficult. Research has shown that pupils with similar needs may be on different stages of the Code.

The total percentage of pupils identified by primary schools as having special educational needs is 15.2%, with a range across LEAs from 8.2 to 29.5% and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs on secondary schools 17.2% with a range across LEAs from 6.9 to 34.4%. The variation across schools and LEAs is considerable.

Since 1990, the number of pupils in special schools in England has slightly risen and is now about 100,000 (including pupils in the so-called pupil referral units). However, as the overall number of pupils is also rising (from about 7½ million to more than 8 million), the percentage of pupils in segregated provision is fairly stable and varies between 1.2 and 1.3%.

As said before, the number of statements has increased in the last five years. This is especially the case in secondary schools where the number of statemented pupils increased with more than 100% in a period of five years. See the next table for the development of integration of pupils with statements in England. The

percentages represent the (development in the) proportion of statemented pupils within the specific provision.

	1991 number of statements	%	1994 number of statements	%	1996 number of statements	%
total	153,228	2.0	194,541	2.5	227,324	2.8
maintained						
nursery school	264	0.5	318	0.6	425	0.8
primary school	32,655	0.8	50,112	1.2	61,676	1.4
secondary school	29,056	1.0	50,142	1.7	65,137	2.2
special school	80,367	87.6	83,673	89.6	87,458	94.2
pupil referral unit	-	-	-	-	1,826	26.6
other schools						
independent	5,621	1.0	5,458	1.0	5,810	1.0
non-maint. special	5,265	87.3	4,838	87.3	4,992	95.6

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The national curriculum, introduced in 1988 and revised in 1995 is intended to be followed by all pupils, regardless of any special educational needs. Opportunities exist for disapplication both from the curriculum and from assessment procedures, but this is not considered necessary for the majority of cases. The framework for national inspection assesses schools' ability to provide the national curriculum appropriately for all pupils. Practice in individual schools and classrooms varies, influenced by experience and expertise within that school, attitudes towards and incidence of pupils with special educational needs and the availability and quality of local authority advice, guidance and support. There is a considerable corpus of material to assist teachers with differentiation. This is variously prepared by mainstream teachers themselves, by specialists within the schools, or by specialist peripatetic teachers. The adaptations can include all forms of differentiation such as input, output, task, mode of delivery and context. Class teachers are normally expected to differentiate on three levels: average, less able,

and extension material. Materials for the small minority of pupils with the most significant needs would sometimes be prepared by the mainstream teacher, but more usually by specialist teachers and/or support assistants. All pupils at stage two and above of the Code of Practice should have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which would state any adaptation necessary for them, together with particular short-term targets.

Teacher training

There is no nationally applied curriculum for initial teacher training courses, but pupils have to be trained for competencies. Relevant to special educational needs are:

- 'the ability to identify special educational needs of learning difficulties'
- 'the ability to identify and provide for special educational needs and specific learning difficulties'

Since the introduction of the Code of Practice in 1994, all teachers are required to monitor and record the progress of pupils at various stages of the Code. These requirements imply that adequate preparation must be given for this during initial training. Much of initial teacher training is undertaken by mainstream schools in collaboration with Institutes for Higher Education. Much depends on the degree of expertise and experience of special educational needs in the school that is providing the training. Within initial teacher training little time is available for specific special educational needs training. New teachers lack confidence in dealing with special educational needs and do not feel that they have been adequately prepared. Much then depends on the induction and professional development programmes in the schools where the new teachers gain their first teaching post.

In-service training concerning special educational needs can consist of full-time courses, part-time, accredited courses and a wide range of short special educational needs courses, run for a day, half a day or in after school hours.

Professional and voluntary associations are quite strong within the world of special educational needs. There is often no guarantee of quality and no assurance of overall coherent training as teachers can choose the kind of training they want.

Next to this training, much informal teacher training and professional development is led by the peripatetic support services.

A group of representatives from a wide range of organisations and agencies with interests in the provision of appropriate training and support for teachers working

in the field of special educational needs formed the Special Educational Needs Training Consortium. They investigated the current situation regarding special educational needs training.

Teacher attitudes

Information about teachers' attitudes is usually found within general studies of integration. Teachers' attitudes appear to be shaped by their experiences. Teachers in mainstream schools are usually willing to have pupils with special educational needs within their classes provided that they feel that they have adequate support. Research indicates that much is determined by local authority and school culture. Attitudes towards pupils who have a poor image in the community are harder than those towards pupils with more acceptable special educational needs. Schools are sensitive to their local reputation as their budget depends on pupil numbers.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Many teachers in special schools usually consider that they fulfil a need and challenge the notion of total inclusion. This attitude is grounded in the notion that segregated provision is needed as long as expertise and resources are lacking in mainstream schools, in consideration of the broad needs of the pupils and in the attention to parental wishes and the wishes of the young people with disabilities. However, many special schools are actively involved in initiatives aimed at reintegrating special school pupils into mainstream schools, or in maintaining pupils in mainstream classes to obviate the necessity of a segregated placement for them.

Parents

Parents have the right to choose the school their child attends. This right also counts for parents of children with special educational needs. Parents make the choice between a mainstream school and a special school.

Barriers to integration

Recent NFER research identified the following problems in integrating pupils in mainstream classrooms:

* the large size of the class
* several pupils with different kinds of special educational needs in mixed-ability

classes

* low-ability classes containing pupils with learning difficulties and pupils with behavioural problems
* teaching objectives were too challenging for some pupils
* a lack of support staff to attend pupils who needed support
* syllabi requiring individual work when some pupils needed support by closely structured tasks.

3.6 Finland

Integration policy

In Finland, recent public discussion upon values and policies concerning the disabled and the provisions of special education has influenced the national reform of civil rights. The reform also guarantees equal rights for pupils with special educational needs, with respect to their political, economical, social, and educational rights.

The government has to ensure that everyone receives education in accordance with his or her potential and special educational needs, within and beyond the comprehensive school and has the right to develop oneself irrespective of his or her financial circumstances. The Comprehensive School Act places an obligation upon the municipality to provide comprehensive school teaching for all pupils of compulsory school age within its territory, or when this fails, to make provisions for all pupils to receive instruction corresponding to the mainstream comprehensive school. The municipality can discharge this obligation by collaborating with other municipalities, or by engaging other educational institutes such as the state-owned special schools. The reforms of school administration in the 1990s with decentralisation of decision-making to the municipalities have decreased the number of special schools, while special classes have been founded in mainstream schools.

Under the Comprehensive School Act (1993), special education is provided to all pupils who are unable to cope with mainstream instruction due to physical or mental disabilities, or who have difficulties in adjusting to work in a mainstream class due to an emotional disorder. The Act does not categorise pupils in types of handicaps. It is the duty of the municipality and the individual school to integrate pupils with special educational needs into the mainstream educational system. Educational, social and health authorities must co-operate in arranging instruction for pupils with special educational needs.

The first alternative of providing special education is to integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream classes and, when necessary, provide special education in small teaching groups. Only when this is not feasible, is the second alternative considered: the provision of special education on a special group, class, or school.

Disabled pupils have a right to pre-school education for two years, provided by either the educational or the social authorities. The educational authorities have the responsibility for arranging and implementing this education. The municipality

may also arrange additional education for one school year for pupils that have already completed their compulsory education.

The Finnish government has approved a Development Plan for the period 1995-2000. The overall principles of this educational development are high quality, equal opportunities, and lifelong learning.

The National Board of Education and the Ministry of Education is launching a research and development project for the period 1997-2001, seeking to improve the comprehensive school in terms of its flexibility both content-wise and structurally. The part of the project focused on special education is based upon the findings of an evaluation report on the state of special education. The purpose is to improve the operational organisation and integration practices of special education at the regional, municipal, school, and pupil level, as well as to gather information on the success and feasibility of integration practices. Another goal is to enhance the identification of pupils in need of special help, as well as to enhance their access to appropriate support and instruction.

Amongst others, the following projects were launched in 1996:

- Development of integration and production of models regarding municipality, school and pupil-level planning, organisation and implementation of integrated special education in co-operation with various interest groups.
- Case studies will be made on successful special education arrangements and on their financial outcomes.
- The statistics on the provision, resources and costs of special education will be elaborated in order to obtain a continuous view on the state of special education nation-wide, as well as to acquire comparative data on the effects of regional and municipal differences.
- It will be ensured that for each pupil transferred to special education, a personal curriculum will be drafted.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

Pupils with special educational needs are not categorised by legislation, but the classification and grouping for various sectors of special education is determined by the educational needs of these pupils. Special educational needs are divided into nine basic categories.

1. pupils with a mild mental handicap
2. pupils with a moderate mental handicap
3. pupils with a hearing impairment

4. pupils with a visual impairment
5. pupils with a physical and other impairment
6. pupils with emotional and social disorders
7. pupils with specific learning disorders
8. pupils with a severe mental deficiency
9. pupils with other problems such as epilepsy, diabetes and other problems that do not fall into the other categories.

For pupils with specific learning disorders part-time education is provided.

In total about 15% of all children in the comprehensive school have special educational needs. Category seven counts for the most pupils: about 11.2% of all children in the comprehensive school belong to this type of special educational needs. Category one caters for about 1.7% and the other categories have percentages below 1%.

Assessment

Transferring a pupil to special education is possible when he or she cannot cope with studying in a mainstream class, or is otherwise unable to adjust to a mainstream class. In such cases, the school board makes decisions regarding the provision of special education. Before making this decision, the school board has to hear the opinion of the parents and a specialist. When necessary, the pupil has to undergo a medical and psychological examination by an expert, and a social report is made about the pupil and his or her circumstances.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

The number of special schools has decreased from 362 in 1991 to 306 in 1994. On the other hand, the number of separate special education classes has increased, a result of groups from closed special schools being incorporated into mainstream comprehensive schools.

The state maintains eight special schools providing comprehensive school education. (In 1994/95, there were 562 pupils in state-owned special schools.) These schools are primarily intended for pupils with hearing or visual impairments or with a physical and other impairment. The state-owned special schools also serve as national centres for development and services and negotiate about related policies with the National Board of Education.

In the school year 1994/95, there were 3,290 special teachers and teachers of special classes, 413 part-time teachers working in special education, and 1,600

school assistants in comprehensive school. *Special class teachers* work with pupils in special classes. *Special teachers* take care of pupils in mainstream classes who need part-time special training and suffer from specific learning difficulties, or more general face problems with studying and concentrating, or with their social relations.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In the school year 1994/95, the total number of pupils in the comprehensive school was about 587,500, of these about 15% were involved in some sort of special education.

It is estimated that about 2% or 3% of all comprehensive school pupils attend segregated special education, in special schools or in special classes within mainstream schools. Some 12% to 13% of all comprehensive school pupils receive part-time special education. For most pupils this means leaving their mainstream classes for a few hours a week, to get instruction in a smaller group or individually. Only less than one percent of all pupils receiving special education are fully integrated in mainstream teaching groups.

Although placing pupils with special educational needs in mainstream teaching groups is considered the right thing to do, full time integration has proven to be difficult. Visually impaired pupils form the exception, 90% of them are taught in mainstream classes.

The integration policy has failed to decrease special education in segregated classes. The increase of part-time special education, which can be seen as a form of integration, has not resulted in a decrease of special classes. Class-based special education has a long and strong tradition in Finland that still favours segregation.

Placement in special classes is usually permanent: the continuing retrenchments of the funds allocated for remedial teaching and part-time special education have decreased the possibilities of pupils being returned to mainstream education. It is the funding system that influences integration.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The Comprehensive School Act stipulates that the Council of State decides on the timetable comprehensive schools and approves a general policy for the instruction of foreign languages, including qualitative and quantitative objectives. The National Board of Education issues curricular guidelines to assist schools in making their

own curriculum. These guidelines provide the foundation which can be interpreted, adapted and added to at the local level in order to come up with a curriculum that is descriptive and that develops and directs the practical work of teaching. The municipalities are obliged to have a curriculum for the comprehensive schools under their jurisdiction. The municipality lays down the framework within which schools carry out their work of development. It is important that the municipalities develop their educational services as a whole that other schools can exploit the strengths of each school and they can diversify their study programmes.

In special education, the general objectives and essential content are the same as in mainstream comprehensive education. The instruction - and when necessary the syllabi - must be adjusted to meet the learning abilities of the pupils. If needed, the syllabi can be adjusted individually for each pupil and a personal curriculum can be developed. The personal curriculum contains an account of the pupil's learning potential, behavioural features, working methods and skills, short and long-term objectives and the means and methods to meet them, as well as evaluations and observations of the progress of the pupil.

Teacher training

Comprehensive schools have two main categories of teachers. At the lower level teachers are usually class teachers who teach all subjects. The training programme for class teachers consists of 160 credits (approximately four years) and leads to a master-level academic degree. The major subject is pedagogy, but the programme also includes basic studies in several subjects, specialisation in one or two teaching subjects and a period of practical training. At the upper level teachers usually teach one or two subjects to several classes. A subject teacher must have a masters-level academic degree from the faculty to which the subject belongs. A subject teacher's degree must include studies in pedagogy and a period of practical teacher training.

In addition, comprehensive schools have special teachers who teach children with speaking, reading or writing disorders or other problems and pupil counsellors who provide educational and vocational guidance at the upper level.

After finishing teacher training, the teacher can enter a special teacher study, with 40-60 credits regarded as a separate entity. These studies are divided into special class teacher education and special teacher education.

The development plan for 1997-2001 includes proposals for improving teacher training:

- long-term in-service training to increase all teachers' skills and knowledge

concerning special education
- studies in special education must be added to initial training for primary school teachers
- more education must be provided to qualify people for special teacher posts
- for unqualified teachers, upgrading studies and extra courses must be arranged leading to qualification
- in teacher training and in the selection of applicants for teaching jobs, attention should be paid to the person's prospective skill and capacity to cope with pupils of different kinds, and to maintain order to ensure a favourable learning environment for all.

Teacher attitudes

Recent surveys have assessed the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to special pedagogy of class teachers and found particularly those of subject teachers as inadequate. The teachers of mainstream education find integration difficult in particularly with regard to disabled, socially maladjusted and emotionally disturbed pupils. The teachers think the problem lies in large teaching groups and in insufficient training of teachers as far as special pedagogy is concerned.

Headteachers of special schools criticise the diagnoses that form the basis for referral, as they do not always lead to the optimal placement of the pupil. Pupils with similar diagnosis may be placed in quite special education groups. Before final placement, pupils may have changed schools several times, which indicates the problems related to referral and placement.

The implementation of full-time integration in mainstream teaching requires that the barriers for integration are removed. It is particularly important to influence the attitudes of the parties involved, to remove any lack on knowledge and skills teachers have through training and to ensure that sufficient supporting measures are available in mainstream teaching.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

The purpose of special education is to help pupils with special educational needs to accomplish compulsory education in accordance with their potential. The growth of special education in quality and quantity has helped compulsory schools to meet the individual needs of all pupils in education and training. Special education has been the resource of knowledge and skills that has helped to

promptly respond to learning problems and other difficulties. The eight state-owned special schools serve as national centres for development and services. The schools are free to develop their own activities. They try to enhance integration efforts through participating in a project of the National Board on qualitative development of special education and elaborate teaching methods and personal curricula as a part of a local curriculum. They also provide training courses for teachers of municipal schools and rehabilitation and adaptation periods for pupils integrated in mainstream education. They also produce study materials.

Parents

Research findings indicate that parents and higher grade pupils are very negative about referral to special education as they fear being labelled. However, parents have a very positive attitude towards part-time special education and generally support pupils' transfer from special education back into mainstream teaching. However, the more severe the disability of the child, the more parents generally are in favour of their child attending education in a special school or in a special class. Parents of pupils in special education have the opinion that the professional skills of the special teachers are good. Most parents feel that they are sufficiently involved in the discussion about referral and placement of their child. A recent evaluation on the state of special education showed that the majority of parents and teachers think that the most important point of consideration in referring pupils to special education is the insurance that the pupils are taught in accordance with their learning potentials.

3.7 France

Integration policy

In France, education is compulsory from age 6 to 16. The educational system is divided into three levels: primary school, including two sub-levels, nursery school and elementary school (8 years); lower secondary school, called 'collège' (4 years), and sixth-form collège called 'lycée' (3 years). During their last year at the lycée, pupils are allowed to pass their A Level Certificate, or 'Baccalauréat' (general, technological or vocational direction).

Primary school is divided into three cycles. Nursery school is attended by children from age 3 to 6, and nearly 100% of the country's children actually go to nursery school. During the first two years they acquire initial learning skills. The last year is part of the basic learning cycle that also includes the first two elementary school years. During the last three elementary school years the learning skills acquired by the pupils are developed and reinforced. Secondary school teaching includes the 'collège' and the 'lycée'. Lower secondary school is divided into three cycles: adaptation (first year), a central cycle (two years) and an orientation cycle (one year). After the collège, young people are guided towards a general, technological or vocational lycée. Over 92% of all children pursue their studies after they have reached the age of 17. Around 14% accomplish their primary cycle in a private school (20% at secondary level). However, most private schools have signed contracts with the State and are part of the country's educational public service.

Since the mid 1970s, the French educational system has undergone a series of changes which may be divided into three broad categories. First of all, within the legal and regulatory framework of the current French educational system, a wide range of diversified teaching methods for mainstream classes have developed. This variety appears indispensable to deal with heterogeneous populations. In the second place, the National Education Administration has, as all French State institutions, been thoroughly reorganised in compliance with territorial decentralisation laws, which have transferred responsibilities from the central State to local authorities (regions, departments, districts). This territorial decentralisation was accompanied by an administrative de-concentration process which has transferred responsibilities from central administrative bodies (Ministry) to regional and local National Education services ('Rectorates', Academic Board of Inspectors). These two converging processes have enabled the system to adapt better to local or regional conditions. Last of all, since the Law of

July 10, 1989 was passed, the very concept of the right of all pupils to receive an education has been redefined since it is no longer confined to compulsory school attendance. Every child is entitled to attend nursery school at the age of 3. Furthermore, every young person must be offered education through which he/she can acquire a professional qualification, if he so desires. This concept is totally non-discriminatory as it applies to all children or teenagers whether they have specific educational needs or not. Furthermore, a memorandum issued on November 18, 1991, co-signed by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Affairs, specifies that the school, collège or lycée which is the nearest to the place of residence of a disabled pupil is in principle supposed to receive him/her for his/her school integration. Likewise it is considered a priority in socially disadvantaged environments, to begin educating children in nursery schools as soon as they reach the age of two.

Specialised education is not under the sole jurisdiction of the Ministry of National Education. It is also supervised, to a large extent, by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Affairs as well as by the Department of Justice. Specialised education is based on a tightly-knit network of classes, schools and specialised establishments and it must be emphasised that a policy designed to prevent learning difficulties has been implemented. The general trend today is to avoid, insofar as possible, sending a pupil to a specialised institution when it is not absolutely indispensable. Moreover, the current policy is to minimise the time spent by the pupil in a specialised institution.

The system's integration strategy should also be enhanced by the flexibility made possible by decentralised decision-making. Local decisions make it easier for various institutions and nearby services to co-operate. However, despite a clear-cut policy seeking to develop educational integration, the practical implementation of this policy encounters a number of difficulties. Several problems and obstacles remain. They must be overcome in order to help provide proper education for the most vulnerable pupils.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The Outline Law for Disabled People (June 30, 1975) is characterised by the fact that it does not define a disability or a disabled person. French legislators deliberately chose to proceed otherwise: they created a local body, the Commission Départementale d'Education Speciale (CDES) which decides what financial or learning assistance measures should be specifically adapted to each individual pupil. No action can be taken without prior consent of the child's parents. With this

provision the only possible definition is the following: 'a disabled child is a child for whom the CDES has taken a decision'. Another provision of the law should be stressed: CDES measures are never permanent and they are all limited in time. Thus, the CDES can provide help for pupils who have a sensory, motor or mental disability, a chronic disease or disability. On the other hand, it is competent to orient pupils only toward certain establishments and services (called medical-educational). As a result (as the CDES can only take decisions concerning a referral to medical and educational settings and services), other pupils can be guided towards institutions or entrusted to various services: by a medical decision; in compliance with a ruling issued by a juvenile court judge who considers that they are 'in danger'; or in accordance with measures of 'social assistance to children'. These pupils also have 'specific needs', but their guidance is not determined by the CDES.

On January 1, 1992, 57.8% of the children and teenagers admitted to medico-educational institutions (controlled by the Ministry of Social Affairs) had intelligence deficiencies (more or less serious); 20.2% had other psychological deficiencies, 7.4% hearing deficiencies, 3.0% visual deficiencies, 6.3% motor deficiencies and around 5% had a multiple handicap. Their total number amounted to approximately 108,000. During the 1993 - 94 school year some 48,000 children (2% of the total school population) attended specialised classes in elementary schools. Slightly less than 120,000 teenagers attended specialised sections in collèges or specialised institutions controlled by the Ministry of National Education (4% of this age group population). Clearly, it is easier to reduce the number of pupils attending specialised classes in elementary schools.

Assessment

As explained above, in France the specific needs of pupils are evaluated according to various procedures and under the jurisdiction of different authorities.

For children and adolescents (up to the age of 20) subject to the Outline Law for Disabled People (1975), Special Educational Commissions (CDES) are in charge of deciding guidance measures. The pupil can be oriented towards a mainstream or a specialised learning context (his/her programme may include, if required, a personal integration project and a rehabilitation or therapeutic follow-up programme monitored by specialised services). S/he can also be sent to a medical-educational establishment. No decision to guide a pupil towards these schools, services or establishments can be taken without a CDES authorisation. When guidance measures do not require financial assistance by social security

agencies, the CDES delegates its responsibilities to Pre-elementary, Elementary or Secondary Commissions (CCPEs or CCSDs) in charge of monitoring individual cases over smaller geographical areas. Statistical surveys concerning children and adolescents monitored by Special Education Commissions are conducted in compliance with the standard classification defined by World Health Organisation in its French version published in January 1989 under the title: *Classification of Deficiencies, Disabilities and Disadvantages.*

The CDES is also competent to grant a Special Education Allowance called 'Allocation d'Education Spéciale' (AES) to the person permanently in charge of raising and educating a child. However, AES allowances are subject to a specific condition: the child's disability rate must be at least equal to 50%. This rate is evaluated according to the child's health condition and by referring to an official scale (latest publication: November 1993). An AES is allocated for a limited period of time: payments can be terminated as soon as the child's health has improved. The AES can be granted to children and adolescents from ages 0 to 20. Subsequently, the adult person may be entitled, according to his/her health condition and degree of self-sufficiency, to a Disabled Adult Allowance and in some cases to other types of aid.

It is important to stress the fact that many children stand to benefit from preventive measures and specialised aids (without any involvement of medical and educational settings and services) whether at school or outside without a decision by a commission. Assistance measures in the school context are offered to the family by educational teams under the responsibility of the school principal. Help can be financed outside of the school context by Social Security agencies, upon presentation of a medical certificate. Other forms of assistance (for instance, free help for homework) can be set up by territorial authorities (districts, départements) or by associations, such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). They are usually offered to families by social services.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

As explained above, specialised education programmes are under the responsibility of various ministries. The Ministry of National Education designs preventive and back-up programmes for pupils who have difficulties in school. It also directly manages a certain number of classes, sections and institutions for children and adolescents with various types of disabilities. Furthermore, it has a legal obligation to pay for learning expenses, wherever the pupil attends school and/or receives medical care. The Ministry of National Education cannot be

relieved of its responsibility for paying teachers who take care of pupils with specific needs, whatever sector they belong to. The Ministry in charge of Social Affairs holds jurisdiction over all the establishments of the medical-educational sector. It monitors socio-educational institutions, although they are financed by département (local regional) budgets. Some of these institutions are also licensed by the Ministry of Justice, which is directly in charge of very few establishments and services. Last of all, the Ministry of Public Health controls medical institutions.

National Education Ministry structures

Three types of structures or establishments can be distinguished:

- institutions operating within the framework of 'mainstream' schools and the mission of which is to prevent learning difficulties;
- institutions in charge of collective and individual integration;
- institutions which provide 'adapted' general and vocational education.

The first category includes specialised networks (created in April 1990) to provide assistance to pupils who experience difficulties at nursery school and primary levels. These institutions originated in former so-called 'adaptation'-structures: adaptation classes and 'groupes d'aide psycho-pédagogiques' (GAPPs: psycho-educational groups) created in 1970. These assistance networks include school psychologists and specialised teachers who provide educational or rehabilitation aids to small groups of pupils. Adaptation classes can also be set up (with a maximum of 15 pupils per unit). However, they should not, in principle, educate any pupil for a period exceeding one year. Professional workers of these networks only step in once families have been informed. Psychological tests and rehabilitation aids cannot occur without prior written consent by the child's family. Over 37% of all specialised teaching positions are devoted to assistance networks. Their main task is indeed preventive.

Other structures available for school establishments are mostly collective integration or 'adapted' teaching structures. Elementary schools include 'Classes d'Intégration Scolaire' (CLIS). There are 4 types of CLIS: they all aimed at integrating pupils with a mental, visual, hearing, or motor deficiency and at enabling them to attend school. There are less than 5,000 classes of this type in France. It must be emphasised that for each pupil attending a CLIS a personal integration project must have been defined. Moreover, he/she must spend some integration time in mainstream classes, according to his/her capacities. Most often, pupils are guided towards the CLIS by the CCPE, but many pupils also receive a

CDES letter of notification so as to benefit from a rehabilitation or therapeutic follow-up programme provided by a medical-educational service, which is liable to operate in all various contexts of a pupil's life (school, home, day nursery, etc.) These services are often called SESSADs which stands for 'Service d'éducation spécialisée et de soins à domicile' (Specialised Education and Home Nursing Service).

Structures similar to the CLIS were set up in collèges in 1995 for pupils with a mental disability: the Unités Pédagogiques d'Intégration (UPIs). These units are still rather rare. They should help integrate some adolescents into mainstream schools after attending a CLIS or a specialised institution. Other collective structures are available in collèges and lycées for adolescents with a sensory or motor deficiency, but they are not called UPIs. Pupils are guided towards these structures by the Commissions d'Education Spéciale du Second Degré (CCSDs). The decision of the CCSD is completed, if required, by a letter of notification addressed to the CDES for a follow-up programme by a SESSAD.

A few (around 60) elementary-level specialised schools remain. Originally, they were often created to receive pupils whose health condition was fragile, but now they fulfil variety of tasks: for instance, they receive children with sensory deficiencies or a serious illness.

The third category of structures is designed to provide a 'General and Vocational Adapted Teaching' to adolescents, usually in collège sections (or SEGPAs). There are 15,000 such structures. They welcome pupils from age 12 to 16 and, sometimes up to the age of 17 or 18. These sections are operated by a specific staff: specialised school teachers, vocational lycée teachers; an Assistant Principal co-ordinates teaching methods and practices under the supervision of the Head of the collège. The first goal of the SEGPA is to provide its pupils with an education which will allow them access, in time, to a vocational training programme and a level V qualification - that is, a 'Certificat d'Aptitude Professional' (CAP: Certificate of Vocational Training).

In spite of all the prevention efforts the number of children in the SEGPA sections remained quite stable (about 120.000). The recent trend is to insist with the need to introduce the SEGPA concept in more colleges, in other vocational schools as well as within the working environment. However, things are developing quite slowly because of the difficulties experienced by many teachers when dealing with teenagers known to be particularly difficult.

Last of all, 82 establishments offer boarding facilities to adolescents who also need an adapted general and vocational education: they are called 'Etablissements

Régionaux d'Enseignement Adapté'. Most of these EREAs welcome pupils who experience the same difficulties as those who attend SEGPAs, but also have family and social problems requiring that they attend a boarding-school.

Some EREAs host pupils who have sensory and motor deficiencies and can provide a lycée level of teaching. They include a medical care unit. One must stress the fact that SEGPAs are only sections within an establishment, whereas EREAs are autonomous establishments with their own principal.

In order to be guided towards a SEGPA or an EREA, a pupil needs a CCSD letter of notification. As any commission decision, this notification is mandatory for establishments but not for families, which have a right of appeal.

Provision controlled by other Ministries

Structures designed for pupils with specific needs and which are under the jurisdiction of other ministries than the National Education Ministry, are varied and complex. Most institutions and services are managed by associations or private, non-profit, organisations. Several public establishments representing 20% in terms of equipment, cover three sectors: the medical-educational, the socio-educational and the medical care sectors. In the medical-educational sector, there are two types of structures: mobile services, which focus on early prevention and part-time or full-time boarding schools providing medical care and education to children and adolescents with various types of disabilities.

Five categories of medical-educational establishments were set up to receive pupils with a mental disability, motor deficiencies, multiple handicaps, hearing deficiencies and visual deficiencies. Decrees published in 1988 and 1989 were aimed at helping in creating or transforming some of these establishments into home or school support services providing special education and home care. They are called 'SESSAD' (Services d'éducation spécialisée et de soins à domicile). The goal is to offer the pupil, as much as possible, an ordinary life environment, while providing necessary support structures. In the socio-educational and medical care sectors, various types of establishments are found to be operating. The socio-educational sector includes mainly Homes for Children which are managed by Social Assistance and other service institutions financed by departmental budgets. A number of these establishments are authorised by the Ministry of Justice for children who are 'morally in danger' or who are delinquents. Very few establishments are managed directly by the Ministry of Justice. The health sector includes various private or public medical care establishments (paediatric services in hospitals or Homes for Children providing medical care).

Number of pupils with special educational needs

Around 2.6% of the country's children of the compulsory education age group, request assistance for specialised education (whether they are integrated in mainstream schools or attend specialised establishments). This percentage covers all the sectors controlled by different Ministries. Figures issued by the Ministry of National Education show that only approximately 2.4% of the country's pupils attend specialised classes or schools. Most of them attend classes or schools managed by the Ministry of National Education (see below).

N.B: A large number of these pupils are not subject to compulsory education.

Number of pupils educated in specialised structures 1994-1995

Ministry of National Education	Ministry of Health and Social Affairs
170,799	127,019

Out of a total of 170,799 pupils receiving specialised education in a National Education Ministry establishment, 48,413 receive primary education and 122,386 secondary education. A small minority of these pupils attend a private establishment.

Total number of pupils attending mainstream schools	
Nursery schools	2,530,800
Elementary schools	3,964,100
1st cycle secondary	3,261,600
2nd cycle vocational	688,600
2nd cycle general and technological	1,482,100
Total	11,927,200

Among the pupils included in these figures, some pupils with special educational needs attend regular schools on a full-time or part-time basis. In the French report, 19,508 pupils with special needs are considered as attending primary education establishments. Figures are not available for secondary education. Most of the pupils attending (75%) are full-timers.

Compared to previous years, the number of pupils sent to specialised structures has decreased. Until 1980 - 1981, nearly 100,000 pupils attended specialised classes in elementary schools; today there are only 50,000. Over the same period,

pupils attending elementary schools decreased by only 7%. Thus, compared with figures provided by the OECD in 1990, the percentage of children attending specialised institutions has dropped: the percentage was then estimated at 2.7%.

Curriculum and teaching

Little attention is currently devoted in the initial training of teachers to the education of pupils with specific needs. However, this situation may soon change. For the time being, their training is mainly a complementary specialised training. Most specialised teachers hold a CAAPSAIS diploma ('Certificat d'aptitude aux actions pédagogiques specialisées d'adaptation et d'intégration scolaires').

The CAAPSAIS was created in 1987. It offers several options and pupils can choose from among seven specialised programmes: A - hearing deficiencies; B - visual deficiencies; C - motor deficiencies and children with an illness; D - serious psychological problems; E - learning difficulties in primary school; F - learning difficulties in the secondary school (collège); G - rehabilitation assistance. To follow a CAAPSAIS training, a teaching diploma is required. The training takes place in specialised departments of the Higher Education Institutes for Training Teachers ('Instituts Universitaires de Formation de Maîtres' - IUFMs) or at the National Center in Suresnes. Most IUFMs focus on options D, E, F and G. The CAAPSAIS curriculum devotes a large part of its programme to integration: it states explicitly that one of the tasks of a teacher is to promote integration. Moreover, one of the skills expected of teachers with a CAAPSAIS diploma is defined as follows: they must be able to help develop integration activities.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools and integration

In compliance with the July 10, 1989 Law, special schools and institutions must help implementing procedures designed to integrate pupils with various disabilities. Especially in secondary schools, it is sometimes difficult to establish more flexible relations between the specialised sections of a collège and the collège itself. On the one hand, teachers in mainstream schools do not consider that their main responsibility is to educate pupils with serious difficulties: they have not been trained to do so. On the other hand, specialised teachers are attached to the recognition of their skills. In this context, the transformation of specialised establishments and the measures adopted to help develop integration can progress only slowly. Those who work in the sector present a diversity of attitudes. In

specialised institutions, professionals are worried about the effects of integration. Not only do they believe that they will have to deal with pupils who are more severely disabled (less disabled pupils are easier to integrate), but they also fear that in the long run their job might be threatened. They are afraid that integration will lead to higher unemployment and in the short-term, to insecure jobs.

Barriers to integration

In France, integration is a clear priority but it is not the only solution for educating pupils with special educational needs. Comprehensive and consistent legislative and regulatory texts have made integration a priority. Now, what is at stake is not the law, but how to apply it. A legislative framework is not sufficient to implement a genuine integration process. A strong commitment and synergy must prevail among those decision makers who define the country's educational policy and those are working in the field. If innovations within in the education sector are to be successful, various actors must hold converging views. Obstacles remain, some of which are directly related to a complex institutional context. First of all, the wide variety of management and financing modes creates complex relations between the institutions and their staff members. Second, decentralisation has increased the degree of autonomy of local authorities in relation to central administration. Thus implementation and achievements are quite uneven. Third, there are heavy budget constraints and public expenditures are curtailed. High unemployment rates, particularly in certain areas, do not create favourable conditions for innovation. On the contrary, they lead people to adopt defensive postures against integration, which is felt as a potential threat in those regions.

Integration also encounters another obstacle: the resistance of teachers in mainstream schools. Teachers are afraid of working with disabled pupils and lack the support necessary to deal with a wide variety of pupils, in their classrooms as well as in the school as a whole. Classrooms are often overcrowded and the integration of a few disabled pupils would add another burden onto their workload. It would require differentiated teaching methods. Furthermore, they do not feel competent to work with such pupils because they lack training. Lastly, cultural differences between specialised institutions and mainstream schools impede the integration process.

However a number of school establishments develop integration initiatives which all personnel approve and participate in. In such establishments, teachers are highly motivated. They are deeply convinced that all of their pupils stand to benefit from integration, which helps them enhance their day-to-day teaching

practice. However, motivation is not enough. Teachers must be trained to accomplish this mission. Furthermore, integration projects must be designed according to local resources. Co-operation and communication between teachers (whether or not they are specialised) and other field workers, are neither obvious nor matter-of-course: they must be supported and encouraged so as to ensure that all efforts converge towards achieving a common goal.

Initiatives must be prepared during the initial training period for teachers. Successful experiments should be propagated and discussed. This would allow future participants on the scene to consider integration as a realistic and positive process, provided that partners co-operate smoothly. One of the expected positive effects of decentralisation is that it helps adapt the system to local or regional contexts. This can help develop integration and it increases the impact of family demands: indeed, families increasingly demand that the rights of their children be recognised.

Given the situation, one cannot claim that the integration process has been completed in France. It is developing slowly. It requires strong commitment on the part of all those who work in the field. It also requires a change in the way society perceives disabled people and the attitude it adopts towards them. Institutions too still have to evolve. Theories on integration are relatively easy to write. However, implementing integration is a more complex task.

3.8 Germany

Integration policy

In Germany, educational legislation and administration of the educational system are primarily the responsibility of the 'Länder'. The right of disabled pupils to education and training appropriate to their needs is enshrined in the Länder constitutions and more detailed provisions are set out in the educational legislation of the Länder. All the Länder have Ministries of Education, Cultural Affairs and Science, which are the highest authorities responsible for education, science and culture. The instrument for co-operation between the 'Land'governments is the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (this conference is called the 'KMK'). Resolutions of the KMK have the status of recommendations. The Ministers are politically committed to transform recommendations into law. The development and organisation of special education in the Länder were harmonised by several decisions adopted by the KMK.

In the last 20 years, the development of integration policy has changed towards better educational support for pupils with a disability in integrated settings. Germany has a differentiated system of special schools to guarantee appropriate support for disabled pupils in the compulsory age. Today, there is agreement that the aim of education is the integration of disabled pupils into professional life and society. However, a discussion started about how this aim can be reached. In 1988, the KMK decided that the system of special educational needs should be more flexible. Terminology changed from 'the need for special education' (in a special school) to 'special educational needs'. A new understanding of disabilities and educational needs has influenced the development of more integration, improved diagnostic techniques, more effective early intervention and prevention, better overall conditions at mainstream schools, more open approaches to instruction and education and a greater appreciation of the benefits for pupils.

In 1994, the KMK stated in a recommendation that the education of the disabled is more and more a co-operative task of all schools and that special education should be understood as a necessary resource for general education. The aim of these recommendations is to create equal opportunities for people with a disability by developing a better standard of special educational support in special schools and in mainstream schools. The development of education in general and the diversity of practical experiences with integration has led to visible change. Today, nearly all Länder have adapted their educational laws in line with the

recommendation of the KMK. Several Länder have established advice centres to promote and translate educational legislation into action. This is a characteristic phase in Germany nowadays: it is now the time to put the positive experiences with integration into laws and on a real and wider scale practice.

The first evaluations and research reports about the question if integration is possible in ordinary schools produced mostly positive results. Pupils with special educational needs achieved the same or even better in mainstream schools than pupils in special schools. Disabled and non-disabled pupils profit from each other, especially in the field of social behaviour, responsibility, independence and self-confidence. The recent approach is that a special school is not the only place to ensure special educational needs are adequately met. Furthermore, it can be expected that some of the 'Länder' will change their school law into the direction of more inclusive education: it is felt that pupils should stay together from the early beginning of their school career, including pupils with problems in speech, behaviour, learning and so on.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

Germany currently uses the term 'sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf'. This term, which is congruent with the term 'special educational needs', is defined by the recommendation of the KMK in 1994 as 'the improvement of care and support for children and adults who are disabled or reduced in their possibilities in education, development and training.'

Pupils threatened by certain handicaps and/or in need of additional support because of problematic situations and pupils with temporary learning difficulties are supported by a combination of measures of internal differentiation within the structure of the general system and additional care and support.

Special education is classified into the following categories with regard to special educational requirements:

- blind
- visually impaired
- deaf
- hearing impaired
- mentally disabled
- physically disabled
- pupils with learning difficulties
- pupils with behavioural problems
- pupils with impaired speech
- pupils undergoing prolonged hospitalisation

In practice, there are many problems with these categories, mainly because a lot of disabled children cannot be unquestionably classified and an increasing number of pupils are multiply handicapped.

Assessment

The assessment of special educational needs is based on multidisciplinary reports. If an institution makes an application for assessment, the parents of the child have to be informed and consulted. Parents can also make an application themselves and can object to a placement decision.

Education of pupils with special educational needs is more and more accepted as a common task for all types of schools. This means a changing attitude towards disabled pupils, the way these pupils should be educated and a changing view of educational assessment and diagnosis. To give appropriate support to a pupil with special educational needs, not only the child's intellectual and behavioural deficits should be assessed, but also the child's abilities, its developmental stage, and its relation with its educational and social environment. The Länder within Germany have discussed this changing of diagnostic criteria. The Recommendation passed by the KMK in 1994 clarifies the necessity of overcoming traditional categories of pupils with handicaps in favour of more differentiated approaches of support and individual development. Eight diagnosis key-elements for pupils with special educational needs were set up: motor, perception, cognition, motivation, communication, interaction, emotion and creativity.

The diagnosis of special educational needs contains a description of the individual special educational needs, the decision about process of education and the place of support. To ensure appropriate support measures, it is necessary to get a qualitative and a quantitative profile that contains information concerning the development of learning and behavioural strategies, the perception, the social relationships, the ability to communicate and interact, the individual and educational circumstances in life, the school environment and its possibilities to change, and the vocational environment.

The decision to the place of support has to consider the adequate form of organisation which in the best possible manner enables methodical-didactic and therapeutically measures appropriate to the particular handicap, corresponds to the socio-emotional needs of the pupils, stimulates self-identification and personality development, and prepares acceptance of social and professional challenges.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Since 1975, an increasing number of disabled pupils have been integrated into mainstream schools through different pilot projects. Various forms of co-operation between mainstream and special schools have emerged and approaches to integrated teaching have been developed in educational science. A focus on institutions has been replaced by a focus on the needs of the individual.

Special education support consists of the following forms of organisation:

* Special educational support through preventive measures

  Pupils facing the threat of disability receive preventive assistance to help counteract the emergence of the disability.

* Special educational support in joint education/lessons

  Education with special support can be organised in mainstream schools in co-operation or with assistance and practical support of a special teacher, other professionals, or in some cases a social worker. Special support is provided inside the classroom, during class lessons, or outside the classroom, part-time or full-time depending on the individual, organisational and institutional situation.

* Special educational support in special schools

  Pupils whose special educational needs cannot be sufficiently met by the facilities within a mainstream school with support of the mobile special pedagogical service receive instruction in special schools. Special schools plan and guarantee individual support and education adapted to the pupil's needs.

There are ten types of special schools (and institutions):

blind pupils	25
visually impaired pupils	32
deaf pupils	43
hearing impaired pupils	53
mentally disabled pupils	749
physically disabled pupils	183
pupils with learning difficulties	1,712
pupils with behavioural problems	348
pupils with impaired speech	314
sick pupils	152
other	263
total	3,874

The 'other' category consists of institutions that teach pupils that cannot be assigned to individual disability categories. Some special schools frequently work as all-day schools or boarding schools. Since 1986, the number of special schools (and institutions) has grown from almost 3,000 to almost 4,000 in 1995.

* Special educational support in co-operative forms

  Many special schools and mainstream schools are in the process of developing close pedagogical co-operation. They offer opportunities for joint activities between the disabled and non-disabled pupils. Co-operation may enrich school lessons and school life for all participants and expands the opportunities for changing between school types and educational courses.

* Special education with special units

  The aim of special education units, either as regional or supra-regional institutions, is to meet individual needs or a range of different needs and to guarantee special education in preventive, integrative and co-operative forms. This form of education is organised as near to the home as possible and provided by specialists.

* Special educational support within the framework of special pedagogical support centres

  In Germany, several Länder make the resource of special pedagogical know-how of special schools available by developing these schools into support centres. The main task of these 'Förderzentren' is the further development of professionalism and organisation. The centres work as regional or supra-regional institutions with one or several key-points of support, and ensure support in a preventive, integration, institutional or co-operative form. Between the Länder, there are differences in conceptions and aims of the centres. The centres are in charge of the diagnostic process, organise courses for pupils with special educational needs, give advice to and co-operate with teachers, offer basic information, provide training, and develop necessary aids and teaching materials.

* Special education in the vocational training sector and during the transition to work environment

  Young people with special educational needs should be given the opportunity to receive vocational training, or have to be supported in integrating in a working environment that match the individual capabilities and skills.

* Special educational support in small special classes

  These classes are organised for the educational support of pupils exhibiting

temporary problems. Special educators take care of these learning groups. Some of these classes are tied to primary or secondary schools. Examples of these classes are observation classes, classes for diagnosis and promotion, and classes for pupils with reading and writing disabilities.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

The official national statistics include all forms of special schools, but do not provide information about integration, prevention, and co-operative measures. Some Länder have published a report about integration developments in their land with numbers of special educational needs pupils in forms of integration. The proportion of integration varies between 5 and 25% between Länder (1997).

In Germany about 4.3% of all children attend a special school. In the following table the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the different special schools are presented.

Pupils with special educational needs in special schools (1995)	
in schools for learning difficulties	220,540
in schools for physically handicapped	19,401
in schools for mentally handicapped	56,157
in schools for speech impairments	31,393
in schools for hearing impaired	5,950
in schools for deaf	3,992
in schools for visually handicapped	2,241
in schools for blind	1,720
in schools for behavioural problems	21,762
in schools in hospitals	7,760
in other schools	19,528
total	390,444

Since 1991, the number of pupils in special schools has grown. In percentages (within the denominator both general and special education) this is a slight increase (from 4.2% to 4.3%).

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

Due to the existing sovereignty of the Länder, each Land had its own legislation and its own curriculum. The Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of each

Land publishes syllabi for ail types of schools, which may be subject-related, area-related or interdisciplinary. The regulations in the syllabi are binding, but the syllabi are formulated in a general way providing teachers freedom of teaching methods in practice. The syllabi deal with content, course objectives and teaching methods.

Apart from special schools for pupils with learning difficulties and schools for mentally handicapped children, all special schools work on the basis of curricula which match those of the mainstream schools in terms of educational goals, lesson content, and performance requirements. However, the methods that special schools use must take into account the special learning requirements and impairments relating to individual types of disability. Schools for pupils with learning difficulties and schools for mentally handicapped pupils work according to their own special curriculum.

Assessment of individual special educational needs includes a decision as to whether the pupil can be taught according to the general curriculum, or needs to be taught according to an adapted curriculum. Some Länder promote integration corresponding with the general curriculum. Other Länder promote integration corresponding to an adapted curriculum too. Some Länder have passed a recommendation that gives pupils with special educational needs, who follow the general curriculum and do not have intellectual retardation, a right to a reduction of exercises, more time for practical work, more technical aids and so on.

The integration process changes the conditions for the learning process. The curricula for schools explicitly grant a lot of freedom to teachers and encourages them to orient towards the different individual development and special educational needs of pupils rather than formal teaching objectives.

Teacher training

Teachers of special education receive their training in a nine-semester basic course, or an additional follow-up course subsequent to other teacher training courses. In all Länder, training is divided into higher education and practical training. The first period of training includes a specialist component with study of at least two subjects or subject areas, an educational science component and a teaching practice component.

For special education, the subjects in the specialist component are in accordance with the current forms of disabilities. The qualification to become a special teacher can be attained by passing the First and Second State Examinations, or by following an additional course after teacher training for a different type of

teaching career, which also includes a state examination. The Länder provide the two forms of training side by side, or as alternatives.

For all teaching careers higher education is followed by preparatory service, as the second stage of teacher training.

Teacher attitudes

In earlier years, integration depended largely on the willingness of teachers. With the legislative changes, the increasing teacher training facilities, in service training and the increase of experience with integration, more and more teachers have developed positive attitudes and are willing to integrate more pupils with special educational needs. Some schools implemented integration strategies many years ago and, as a result, have changed their profile. Generally, positive attitudes largely depend upon positive experience and sufficient resources. However, some teachers feel that they lack sufficient training and feel that special education is best given in special schools where more adequate support is available.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

To realise the aim of integration (and joint education) special schools have received an enlarged area of responsibility. The special schools have two functions: they provide special education in their own special school and they provide special educational assistance in the form of a teaching and consulting service provided for integrated forms of education in mainstream schools.

The tasks of special schools have changed in the development of different working methods for pupils with special educational needs. Several forms of co-operative teaching practices were tested and extended, such as ambulant and mobile services and joint teaching practice in mainstream schools.

Parents

Recently a debate has begun focusing upon the highly differentiated system of the previous special schools and their previous responsibilities. Parents of children with disabilities ask for an approach which is based more upon the philosophy of 'normality' as in the Nordic countries.

Barriers to integration

In some areas in Germany there is a tendency to refer to the insufficient funding in relation to integration. It is felt that there are increasing obstacles for integration because of the lack of good conditions.

3.9 Greece

Integration policy

In Greece, the special education field is an integral and organic part of general education. The current legislation promotes the integration of pupils with special educational needs into the mainstream school system. It provides for the establishment of special classes operating in mainstream schools and the staffing with specialist teachers who administer individualised educational programmes to pupils with learning difficulties and behavioural problems.

Currently, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is in the process of drafting a Bill aimed at defining the legislative framework for Special Education and to integrate children with special educational needs into general, trade and technical education. Under this Bill, measures are taken and services provided at all levels of education. The measures include the development and implementation of special programmes and teaching methods, as well as the improvement of the availability of special materials, instruments and other equipment. The services that are provided include diagnosis, assessment, pedagogical and psychological support, physiotherapy, ergotherapy, speech therapy, consultative social work, transportation and travel and any other service that fosters equal treatment for people with special educational needs.

The special classes are renamed integration classes, expressing that the main purpose is to support pupils with special educational needs to become fully integrated into mainstream classes by planning and implementing individualised programmes that include long-term and short-term goals.

The Pedagogical Institute is now planning pilot projects for school integration, in order to improve integration in Greece on a large scale. The Special Education Directorate proposed new measures which are contained in the new law on special education. Amongst others the following interventions are proposed:

1. the integration of children with special educational needs into kindergartens from the age of three and the provision of facilities in order to keep these children in school after mainstream teaching hours for sport and the development of individual skills
2. the organisation of pre-vocational workshops in addition to the education in the special school in order to give pupils an opportunity to develop and cultivate other skills in addition to theoretical knowledge and the creation of technical vocational schools for pupils with special educational needs
3. the improvement of professional support in each region: diagnostic and

assessment centres will provide further assistance to children with special educational needs and their families, and provide support for their classroom teacher

4. the development of provision of education and training for autistic children, children with multiple disabilities, children in hospitals and children in correctional institutions
5. the enhancement of individualised teaching for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

Within the law, pupils with special educational needs are defined as pupils who have particular difficulties in learning or in adapting to the environment in mainstream schools, because of physical, mental, psychological or social impairments, but also as a person who needs a special educational approach and care for a certain period, or for all his or her school life.

Under the new law, the diagnostic process is assigned to the Centres for Diagnosis, Assessment and Consultative Support (the 'KDAY'-centres). The purpose of the KDAY is to offer services in diagnosing, assessing and supporting all pupils and in particular pupils with special educational needs, by promoting and supporting their integration into mainstream schools. Another task is to support, inform, train and sensitise teachers, parents and society.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

In Greece there are about 200 special schools. In 1995/96, the number of special pre-schools in Greece was 39 and the number of special primary schools 138. In secondary education there were 10 special schools for general secondary education and four special technical vocational schools.

In 1995/96, there were also 650 special classes throughout the country.

Integration is provided in special classes or departments in mainstream schools that provide support for pupils with special educational needs. The assistance of a pupil with a special educational needs and the extent and type of adaptations of the mainstream educational programme depend on the pupil's educational and other needs. This is implemented through an individual educational programme. This individualised programme covers either the entire programme or certain courses of full-time or part-time study. Integration can also be organised in special schools that share a building with a mainstream school, so the schools can organise cultural activities together.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In the following table the numbers of pupils in the different educational settings are presented. It shows that about 1.6 million children attend education in Greece, from which less than 1% are labelled as having special educational needs.

	pre-school	primary	junior-high	high school	techn-voc
special schools					
physically disabled	60	180	87	60	22
hearing impaired	24	254	101	98	35
visually impaired	4	54			
mentally disabled	128	2,326			210
experimental		204			
autistic		7			
total	216	3,025	188	158	267
special groups					
hearing impaired	39				
visually impaired		8			
mentally disabled	2				
total	41	8			
Part-time special classes					
physically disabled		4			
hearing impaired		59			
learning difficulties		8,940			
total		9,003			
mainstream schools	127,947	675,267	674,363	26,900	133,889

The total number of pupils in mainstream schools is 1,638,366. The total number of pupils in special schools and special groups is 3,903 and the total number of pupils in part-time special classes is 9,003. This means that about 13,000 pupils are registered as having special educational needs, which is about 0.8%. Most of these pupils are educated in part-time special classes (70%) and a minority in

special settings (30%). It is unclear as to exactly which degree these pupils are educated in or outside the mainstream. However, a conservative estimate reveals that at the highest 0.8% are educated in segregated settings, but probably even less (at least 0.2% of all pupils are educated in segregated educational settings).

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The Pedagogical Institute has prepared a Special Education Curriculum Framework that was published in the Government Gazette in 1996. The purpose of this framework is to provide support to pupils with special educational needs so that they can develop physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, ethically and aesthetically to the extent of their capacities and may be integrated into the mainstream school and the social environment. Based on this curriculum, the book 'Activities for learning preparedness' helps teachers in drawing up individualised teaching programmes for the development of pupils with special educational needs in a mainstream or a special school. The Pedagogical Institute has prepared support material for the programmes for school learning preparedness. The special education group at the Pedagogical Institute has also prepared a Curriculum Framework for special learning difficulties.

Teacher training

The Special Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs took the different measures in the field of the support of teachers. As of the coming school year, seminars will be organised for all educational officials, for about 12,000 teachers in primary and secondary mainstream and special schools and special professionals, for 1,000 parents of children with special educational needs and for all members of medical diagnostic centres. These seminars will provide educational knowledge and demonstrate teaching methods in an effort to raise awareness regarding children with special educational needs.

Alongside these seminars, the same interested parties can attend specialised courses in educating pupils who are sightless, deaf, mentally retarded, autistic, physically handicapped, socially maladjusted, or who have learning difficulties.

During the past two years, several pilot projects have been implemented in the field of integration. Since the results of these projects were satisfactory, the Special Education Directorate has included under the Community Support Framework a three-year programme to train and inform all special education teachers and all

teachers in mainstream education in integration issues. This training programme has been assigned to the University of Athens, and will be implemented throughout the country. In every school, core groups of educators will be created to promote integration.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Another significant intervention of the Ministry is that special schools should take part in integration. Pupils in special schools have special educational needs and thus long-term support must be provided for them in these schools. Many special schools share a building with a mainstream school and implement programmes of partial integration in terms of the curriculum and total integration in terms of social sphere and mutual acceptance. Special education school counsellors promote the integration of pupils with special educational needs, providing instructions and support programmes for teachers in mainstream schools as well, assisting them to make the necessary adjustments to the mainstream school curriculum.

Parents

Parents have a positive attitude towards integration, since they consider it essential. However, to some extent, they are reserved as they know there are various sub-cultural difficulties in achieving successful integration in education and society. The attitude towards integration differs in the society. The attitude of people is based on experience and is thus, controversial. In fact, there is a problem in accepting children with special educational needs. Society reacts according to the messages it receives, the frequency and the way of receiving them and the means of access and claim.

A greater degree of awareness raising and information provision is required in the community about human rights, the possibilities and capabilities of people with special educational needs and the necessity for programmes to support school, financial, and social integration.

To reinforce integration, the Special Education Directorate organised events to raise awareness amongst citizens about people with special educational needs in many cities throughout the country. These events were received very well and will continue in the next school year.

Barriers to integration

The barriers to integration are related to the material and technical infrastructure, the lack or insufficiency of support services that facilitate integration and the insufficient nature of institutional (legislation etc.) rules to facilitate and arrange integration.

Problems in integration are also reported to be lack of training for teachers in mainstream schools and their inability to assist the integration programmes and to inform parents and society of the need for integration. As pointed out before, at the moment in Greece an extensive innovation is being implemented to overcome these barriers.

3.10 Italy

Integration policy

The current policy concerning special educational needs is full integration of pupils with special educational needs. This integration policy has been practised for almost twenty years, since the enactment of two law provisions in 1976 and 1977. During the following years the intent to place pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools has increased progressively. This has found its realisation in the Law of 1992 (Law 104, 5th of February 1992). This law represents the most complete intervention concerning the interest of handicapped pupils' rights made by the Italian State. The law insists on the need to test the capacities of the pupils with special educational needs as a condition for defining their educational needs and the development of their abilities.

The Ministry of Public Education provides:

* the organisation of educational activities with a flexibility in the setting of the classes in order to implement the school programme.
* guaranteed continuity in education between school levels. This requires a close collaboration between teachers at different levels.

Integration of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream units and classes of every kind and level of education means cutting down the number of pupils of that unit or class. For placement in mainstream classes, the psycho-physical development of the pupils is more important than his or her age. Special curricula based on pupils' individual abilities are allowed.

A group of experts in school integration advises the Provincial Director of Education and each school. They collaborate with local authorities and with the local health authority in drawing up a plan to implement individual education programmes and other activities concerning integration of pupils with special educational needs.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

A person is called 'handicapped' when her/his physical, psychological or sensory disability is steady or progressive, when it causes difficulties in learning, relationships or integration into working life and when it is serious enough to give rise to social disadvantage or social exclusion. A single or multiple disability is considered as serious when, taking into account the age of the person, it

diminishes personal autonomy, thus requiring the provision of permanent assistance.

Assessment

The Local Health Authority has the task to evaluate, through special medical commissions, the disability and the need for a permanent assistance and the general ability of the child. The commissions include a social worker and an expert on that kind of handicap, both of them employed by the Local Health Authorities.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

In the age range from birth to three, children with special educational needs are guaranteed a place in nursery schools; from three to six they are guaranteed a place in kindergartens, and from six to fourteen (the compulsory age range is from six to fourteen), pupils with special educational needs are guaranteed a place and education in mainstream classes in mainstream education. Pupils with special educational needs who have completed compulsory education are guaranteed admission in mainstream classes of post-compulsory secondary schools and when they have completed this they are guaranteed access to higher education: universities and other institutions of higher education.

Educational integration focuses upon the development of the pupil's potential in learning, communication, building relationships and socialising. Pupils with difficulties in learning and difficulties related to their handicap have the right to study, just like all other children.

Pupils with special educational needs, who are temporarily unable to go to school for health reasons are also guaranteed education. The provincial Director of Education arranges mainstream classes for these pupils in hospitals, as detached units of state schools.

School integration of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream units and classes of any kind and level of education, is achieved through a co-ordinated plan of school services, health and social assistance, cultural, recreation and sport centres as well as through activities managed by public or private bodies. Technical equipment and educational instruments are supplied to schools and universities.

In the different levels of compulsory education, one support teacher is provided for every four handicapped pupils. However, this ratio can be changed in primary schools when there are pupils with particularly serious handicaps on the basis of

their functional diagnosis, or when schools are situated in the mountains, or on little islands.

Although full integration of pupils with special educational needs is the current policy, there are also schools for blind and schools for deaf and speech impaired. Blind and deaf and speech impaired pupils can complete their compulsory education in mainstream schools as well as in special schools. Furthermore, there are schools with particular goals for the special education of handicapped minors and minors with difficulties.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In Italy, there is no detailed information available about the number of pupils with special educational needs and whether they receive education in special groups, special classes or special schools. However, the number of segregated special schools is known. Recent information revealed that there exists about 25 of these separate special schools. The information is detailed in the following table:

special schools	for the blind	for deaf and speech impaired
primary schools	5	6
lower secondary	12	3

Earlier assessments on the number of pupils with special educational needs revealed that in 1990 about 1.3% (about 108,000 of more than 8½ million in the total population) were identified as having special educational needs (OECD, 1995). The majority of these were educated in the mainstream schools. Given the low number of special schools, the total population with special educational needs that is placed in segregated setting can be estimated below 0.5%.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

With regards to school integration, parents and health and social services collaborate in drawing up a functional-dynamic profile of the pupil with special educational needs based on the functional diagnosis. This profile is required to determine the way the curriculum has to be adapted to the particular needs of the pupil. Specialist teaching staff for each level of education helps with the development of an adapted curriculum.

The functional-dynamic profile describes the pupil's potential and the weakness from different angles. It points at the pupil's learning difficulties related to the particular kind of handicap and to individual skills, which should be encouraged and developed. The functional-dynamic profile is updated at the end of pre-school, primary and lower secondary education, as well as during upper secondary education.

Teacher training

Support teachers assigned to mainstream classes with handicapped pupils, must have attained a specialist qualification at the end of a theoretical and practical course of two years that are organised in institutions approved by the Ministry. Only qualified teachers can attend this course. They become mainstream teachers and participate in the education plan and in drawing up and assessment of activities.

The Ministry of Public Education makes provisions for in-service teacher training courses regarding the integration of pupils with special educational needs. Some courses also include the staff of Local Health Authorities and local authorities involved in education and rehabilitation plans. Furthermore, study and work groups, composed of teachers, service workers, parents and pupils are set up in all primary school clusters and lower and upper secondary schools to contribute to the education and integration activities of the education plan.

The administrative and teaching staff of schools for the blind, for the deaf and speech impaired and of schools with particular aims, must have attained a specialist qualification at the end of a two-year theoretical and practical course held in institutes approved by the Ministry of Public Education.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

In agreement with the local authorities, provincial school councils encourage the integration of pupils of special schools based upon an adequate programme. Sometimes integration takes place through the institution of social services operating outside the special schools.

Teacher attitudes

The Italian Ministry of Public Education has not studied the level of acceptance of the integration of pupils with special educational needs. It is assumed that parents of pupils without special educational needs, teachers and the society have definitely

accepted the integration of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream schools. Integration has been common practice for almost 20 years.

Barriers to integration

The OECD report of 1995 pointed to some barriers to integration within secondary and higher education levels. According to that report, integration in Italy is well accepted in nursery schools, kindergartens and primary schools, but there are some problems at the higher levels of education. At that time the legislative framework was not yet implemented to support integration at those levels and also teacher training has not been developed on secondary and higher educational levels.

3.11 The Netherlands

Integration policy

In the Netherlands, special education was originally regulated through special regulations under the Primary Education Act of 1920. In 1967, the 'Special Education Decree' was issued, which specified regulations for schools for special education. In 1985, this Decree was replaced by the Interim Act for Special Education and Secondary Special Education (ISOVSO). This Interim Act encompasses a period of ten years, but due to recent discussions on integration in the Netherlands definite legislation will not comprise a new, separate special education act.

The educational system in the Netherlands consists of mainstream schools and special schools. Since the sixties, Dutch special education has developed into a wide-ranging system for pupils who cannot keep up in mainstream schools. For a long time, this highly differentiated and extensive special education system was seen as an expression of the concern for pupils with special educational needs. Nowadays, a growing group of policy makers, educators and parents think segregation in education has gone too far. A gradually increasing number of parents want their special educational needs child to attend a mainstream school, so the child will receive as normal schooling as possible.

The first step towards integration was the Primary School Act of 1985. This Act stated that the major goal of primary schools is to offer appropriate instruction to all pupils aged from four to 12 and to guarantee all pupils an uninterrupted school career. Ideally, each pupil would receive the instruction that fits their unique educational needs. If primary schools were able to offer this so-called adaptive instruction, the number of special educational needs pupils was expected to decrease more or less spontaneously. However, in the years after 1985, the expansion of special education did not stop.

In 1990 a new government policy document, 'Together to School Again' (the so-called WSNS-policy), was intended to make a fresh start in integrating pupils with special educational needs. Under this policy, all primary schools and the special schools for learning disabled and educable mentally retarded children have been grouped into regional clusters. Extra funding was available to set up these clusters. The money is earmarked for extra staff with the specific task of offering help to pupils with special educational needs. As a result of this policy, mainstream and special schools began to work together; special educational needs co-ordinators were appointed in every mainstream school, training programmes were launched,

new legislation passed, and regulations for new funding of mainstream and special schools were drawn up.

Recently parliament decided that each of the 300 school clusters will be funded equally, based on the total enrolment in primary education. About 50% of this amount will be transferred directly to existing special provisions and the other half will be allocated to the school cluster. This will be implemented from 1998 onwards and in 2003 the new funding structure should be fully operational. By that time regions will have to adapt their special education provision to the new funding structure. Some regions may have to close special schools, where there was a high degree of segregated provisions compared to other regions, whilst other areas may receive additional funds as a reward for a regional effective integration policy.

The point is whether these two main resources will foster the government objective of integrating special and mainstream education. The setting up of school clusters will not directly result in a less segregated system: much more is needed. However, it must be said that without the necessary facilities (in terms of extra specialist help/time/attention) integration has little chance of succeeding. In this sense, introducing a new funding structure is one of the necessary preconditions for integration.

For schools providing secondary education for pupils with learning difficulties, a restructuring of lower forms of mainstream secondary education ((I)VBO and MAVO) and secondary special education has been proposed, resulting in four types of instructional programmes.

1. a theoretical programme focusing on transition to higher forms of secondary education
2. a practical programme focusing on transition to vocational training
3. a mixture of both theoretical and practical programmes
4. a labour market oriented programme

Alongside these four programmes, an individual support structure will be developed. In line with the integration policy for the primary special schools, schools for the lower forms of secondary education and schools for secondary special education have to work together in school clusters, starting from January 1999 onwards.

For the education of pupils with sensory, physical, mental disabilities or behavioural problems a separate line of policy development has recently been started. Until now, these pupils can only receive the support they need after admittance to a full-time special school. Recent government reports propose that the financing mechanism (funding special schools on the basis of the number of

pupils that are placed) should be stopped in favour of linking financing of special services to the pupil involved, regardless of the type of schooling. The idea is to change from a supply-oriented financing to a demand-oriented financing. If a pupil meets the criteria for this so-called 'pupil-bound budget', parents and pupils can choose a school - special or mainstream - and take part in deciding how to use the funding.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The Dutch educational system distinguishes at present 12 types of special education:

Learning disabled
Educable mentally retarded
Deaf
Hearing impaired
Children with severe speech disorders
Blind and partially sighted
Physically handicapped
Chronically ill
Severely maladjusted
Multiply handicapped
Children in schools attached to paedological institutes
Severe mentally retarded children

Assessment

Although pupils are formally referred to special education by their parents, referrals are usually initiated by classroom teachers, in consultation with the school principal, the school support service and the parents. In general, the admission board of the special school (a psychologist, a physician, a social worker, the school principal) performs an extensive assessment in order to decide whether the pupil is eligible for special education. Two years after the admittance, a re-examination has to take place. The goals of this re-examination are the assessment of the results of the education, of how the further development of the pupil's capacities can be realised and whether the pupils should be transferred to mainstream education or another type of special education. A regional referral board evaluates the referral to primary special schools for pupils with learning disabilities, for educable mentally retarded pupils and for infants with developmental difficulties. This board decides upon the appropriateness of the

referral on the basis of written material about the pupil and documented actions of the referring school. If the referral is considered appropriate, the admission board of a special school performs the assessment.

Particularly in schools for learning disabled or educable mentally retarded pupils, the IQ test is the focal point of the assessment, as well as the basis for the final placement. A rejection or a referral to another mainstream school seldom occurs. Currently, the procedures for referral and the role of the admission boards are being increasingly criticised. After admittance, pupils are hardly ever re-placed in mainstream education.

For decades, the assessment of a pupil's handicap focused on a classification of the kind of handicap. Basically, the division into different types of special education can be interpreted as a consequence of the psycho-medical paradigm. Now, assessment also focuses on the description of the problem a pupil has in the educational setting and assessment is always connected with the perspective of taking decisions about special support.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

As pointed out before, the educational system in the Netherlands consists of 12 different types of schools for special education.

	special schools
Learning disabled	334
Educable mentally retarded	328
Deaf	9
Hearing impaired	31
Children with severe speech disorders	2
Blind and partially sighted	4
Physically handicapped	29
Chronically ill	36
Severely maladjusted	69
Multiple handicapped	19
Children in schools attached to paedological institutes	11
Severely mentally retarded children	103
Total number of special schools	975

Infants with developmental difficulties do not receive education in independent

special schools, but services for these pupils take place in departments attached to other special schools (those for learning disabled, educable mentally retarded and severely maladjusted). The paedological institutes are associated with a university.

Generally, these twelve types of provision for special education take place in separate schools, but a type of special education can also be provided in a department attached to another type of special education.

Next to this separate system for pupils with educational needs, there are also some examples of provisions that strive for or support integration of pupils with special educational needs. The *first example* is peripatetic supervision. Peripatetic supervision (or ambulant teaching) supports pupils that return from special education to a mainstream school and pupils who are eligible for special education but have not been referred to the separate special school system. A special education teacher can offer the mainstream education teacher and the pupil the support necessary for an adequate education in a mainstream school. These facilities are used to an increasing extent. About 8,000 pupils made use of the provision of peripatetic teaching in 1995, most of them in secondary education (64%, and 36% in primary education). Research showed that peripatetic teaching can be a valuable instrument for improving the relationship between special and mainstream education. Moreover, most pupils receiving peripatetic teaching do perform according to expectations, or even better.

A *second example* of integration, is the growing number of pupils with Down's syndrome in mainstream education. This growth is fully due to activities of parents' organisations. Parents want their children with Down's syndrome to attend mainstream schools. Although Dutch mainstream schools do not have to accept these pupils, an increasing number of mainstream schools accept the placement as a new challenge. The Dutch government has followed this development by providing extra support in mainstream education.

A *third example* of innovation towards integration consists of the local projects, such as projects aimed at more intensive co-operation between mainstream and special education, projects aimed at thematic subjects such as referral and placement, and projects dealing with returning pupils from special to mainstream education. An example of a local project is the Part-Time Special Group (PTSG) developed by a mainstream school. The PTSG aims at providing individual educational arrangements in order to prevent referral. A PTSG pupil spends roughly half of his/her time in the mainstream group, still belonging to his/her mainstream class. The PTSG can be considered as a part-time pull out model, but its segregation effects are small compared with referring pupils to full-time special

schools. The school, the teachers, the children and their parents seem fairly content with the PTSG.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In the compulsory age range (5 - 16 years) 4.9% of all pupils attend special education in a separate special school. Of course, these figures vary across age groups: in the age group of 10 - 11 years more than 7% of the pupils are placed in the separate special school system.

Concerning the age group of 4 - 19 years old about 4% of all pupils follow education in a separate special education setting. Compared to 1990, this is a considerable growth: in 1990 about 3.4% of all pupils in the same population were attending special schools. In 1980 this was a mere 2.3%. Recent figures show that the number of pupils in special settings is now fairly stable.

The large majority of pupils with special educational needs consists of the learning disabled and the mentally retarded. These two groups (including the departments for younger children) cater for about 70% of all pupils in special education: 2.8% of all pupils attend these two school types. Thus, most of the pupils belong to the group of learning disabled (1.5%) and the educable mentally retarded (1.3%). The other groups count for relative small percentages: severely mentally retarded (0.3%) and severely maladjusted or behavioural problems (0.3%). All the other types of disability count for 0.1% or less.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The curriculum offered in Dutch schools is mainly decided by the principal and the teachers of a school. Sometimes the school board is also involved. The Dutch government has formulated core goals, and these influence the school curriculum to some extent, but schools are relatively free in deciding what subject matters they want to teach the pupils.

Education in special schools is based on a schoolwork plan, which contains an overview of the organisation and the content of education. The curriculum has to contain the same subjects as in mainstream schools. However, after approval of the Minister of Education and Science, it is possible to adjust the curriculum to pupils with multiple handicaps.

If necessary, an individual educational programme is developed, which describes how the school work plan is adjusted for the individual pupil or group

of pupils. This plan describes which educational aims are aimed at for the specific pupil(s), how the education will be organised, and how and when the results will be evaluated. On the basis of this evaluation the plan can be adjusted or remade. In practice, many schools only develop individual educational programmes for pupils with serious or complicated problems.

Teacher training

In the Netherlands, initial teacher training (ITT) takes four years. The programme for ITT is very full and continues to extend through diverse developments in society. Therefore, adding special educational needs programmes is not easy.

Teachers are not obliged to attend in-service education. However, a considerable number of teachers follow short courses on various subject-matters, and a growing number of mainstream school teachers have a special education certificate. To obtain training in special education, one should already be a qualified teacher. Training is provided on a two-year, part-time basis and leads to certification for special education.

Teacher attitudes

Teachers in mainstream education generally welcome the idea that pupils with special educational needs go to mainstream schools and grow up with other pupils. However, when a special educational needs pupil is placed in a mainstream classroom, teachers start to worry and make objections. Teachers are afraid that their knowledge and skills are insufficient and that the placement of a pupil with special educational needs will have a negative influence upon the other pupils in the classroom. They look for possibilities to share their responsibility with the support teacher, or to get rid of the responsibility by using a special class or school. However, teachers who are experienced in teaching pupils with special educational needs in mainstream settings seem to develop a positive, more self-confident attitude.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Special schools are uneasy with the integration policy as specified in the 'Together to school again' policy (for the milder special educational needs). It will almost certainly lead to a reduction of the number of pupils referred to special schools

and finally result in the closing of special schools. Considerable numbers of special school teachers will experience changes in their work: either they will work as teachers in mainstream schools, act as consultants to their new colleagues in mainstream education, or they will be teachers in special schools with pupils with more complex special educational needs. The development towards integration is expected to increase the workload of teachers in special education. The special schools will develop as centres of expertise, in which various resources are made available to mainstream schools.

Parents

The basic idea behind demand-oriented financing (for the more severe special educational needs) is that parents have an important voice in choosing a school for their child. In principle, parents choose between mainstream and special education. The ruling that mainstream schools are not allowed to refuse pupils will reinforce the parents' position. First experiences with the placement of pupils with Down's syndrome reveal that it is not easy for parents to choose between a mainstream and a special school and to base this choice on the quality of education for their child.

Attitudes

People in favour of integration regard cognitive differences as irrelevant. These people consider segregation as being in conflict with widely accepted human rights and socially undesirable. Special education does not diminish the problems and academic difficulties of the referred pupils and serves as a means of relieving mainstream education of difficult-to-handle and time-consuming pupils. In this sense, the high costs and the side effects of a segregated system such as labelling and a shattered school career are seen as unjustified.

Advocates of segregation point at the inappropriateness of mainstream school placement of pupils with profound and special problems. Pupils with learning difficulties and mentally retarded pupils are best placed in segregated settings, as they need highly differentiated and individual teaching.

A gradually increasing number of parents want their special educational needs child to attend a mainstream school because they like to send their child to the same school as their other children, to a neighbourhood school and to educate their child with other local children. They want their child to receive a normal schooling as possible.

Barriers to integration

Special education placement does not diminish the problems and academic difficulties of the pupils referred and that it often functions as safety-valve: i.e. as an additional means of relieving mainstream education of difficult-to-handle and time-consuming pupils (Pijl, 1989). In this sense the high costs and side effects of a segregated system, such as labelling or a shattered school career, are unjustified. The discussion also refers to a wider societal context. The segregation of these pupils is considered in conflict with widely accepted human rights, socially undesirable and a perhaps convenient, but not necessary way to provide special services.

Educational factors, system characteristics and policy factors too, seem of relevance here. Children differ and these differences seem to increase. Schools are not able to deal with these growing differences. As a result more and more pupils end up in a danger zone. Despite all the educational innovations of the past decades, it is clear that education mainly focuses on the average pupil. If there are too many pupils with specific needs in the classroom, teaching becomes a complex problem.

To solve the above-mentioned problem, teachers need support. The support that is available is located outside the school building: in schools for special education, school counselling services and similar support institutions. There is not enough support in the school itself. The only way out for teachers is to refer children with specific needs to schools that have more time and expertise available: the separate schools for special education.

Special and mainstream education work independently and it is this aspect of the system, amongst other things, which stimulates referral to special education as special help is only available when pupils enter a school for special education. Even if temporary support could provide a solution, it is impossible in practice. Legal obstacles make it difficult for the two separate school systems to organise this support in a more flexible way. This means that the pupil with special educational needs has to be taken to the facilities instead of vice versa. The responsibility for the pupil is passed on to another part of the educational system.

It is clear that special education is an attractive alternative to mainstream education: it offers special provision for pupils with special educational needs. It is the system that deprives mainstream education of the possibility of helping pupils under the same conditions. In this sense, the provision enhances the need (the law of supply and demand). It is difficult to realise collaboration between mainstream and special education, as each school has its own financial, administrative and staff systems.

Separate legislation for mainstream and special education is an important factor in creating a segregated system. It underlines the legislator's view that pupils with special educational needs should be placed in special schools. One act for all primary education is a vital condition for achieving integrated education. Also, the specific rules and regulations need to be assessed against current thinking that pupils with special educational needs should be educated in mainstream schools. Statutory procedures should not impede any progress towards integrating special and mainstream education.

Funding is a further key factor in integration. If policy is not translated properly into financial terms, then it has little success of being implemented. In other words, if the government proclaims integration, it has to be clearly arranged in a financial sense: there should be a distinct integration incentive. Connecting financial resources to a separate system is a clear victory for segregationists and results in more pupils being placed outside the mainstream.

As pointed out before, two separate funding systems are being developed to encourage integration: a system for the milder special educational needs and a system for the more severe special educational needs. The first system is based on providing a budget to regional clusters of collaborating mainstream and special schools (for the milder special educational needs) and the second system is a demand-oriented system, known as the pupil-bound budget, for pupils with sensory, physical, mental disabilities and/or behavioural problems.

3.12 Norway

Integration policy

The Norwegian government determines the objectives and establishes the framework for education. A common national standard is ensured by means of legislation and a national curriculum. Each county has a national educational office, which carries out central government functions and acts as a body of appeal for decisions concerning individual pupils. In recent years a considerable amount of responsibility has been transferred from central to local government. The municipalities are responsible for the running and the administration of primary and lower secondary schools and the counties for upper secondary schools.

Since 1975, there has been no specific legislation regarding the field of special education. The Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education makes each municipality responsible for providing education for all pupils who are residents in the municipality regardless of their abilities. All pupils are registered at their local school and all children have the right to receive instruction adapted to their individual abilities and aptitudes. The municipalities may organise the special education inside or outside the mainstream school, but the main principle in Norwegian school policy is that pupils with special educational needs are to be integrated in the mainstream school. Special education should be provided in accordance with the principles of integration, participation and decentralisation. The Education Act also states that the municipalities must provide a pedagogical psychological service.

Although the official policy has been integration for more than 20 years, Norway had 40 national schools for special education until 1992. Since 1991, a re-organisation of special education has been taking place. A main objective of the re-organisation has been to change from a system of special schools to a system of full integration. An important element of the re-organisation is that 20 of the former national, special schools have been changed into resource centres. Another important element is the five-year research programme (1993-1998) that aims at defining measures and services to be developed in order to give all learners a high quality education in their own community. In addition, a research and development programme has been started with emphasis upon strengthening the educational-psychological service at the community level.

In 1996 and 1997, this re-organisation of special education was evaluated. The ministry is now writing a White paper with suggestions to the Parliament on how special education should be organised in the future. The main question is how the

support system outside mainstream schools should be organised to promote a continued policy of integration.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

The term 'special needs education' is used for pupils who are unable to follow the mainstream course of studies. Pupils with special educational needs are not categorised in the law nor in the curriculum. The national resource centres and to some extent also special teacher training are organised according to categories that are leftover from the old special school system:

- visual impairment
- hearing impairment
- physical impairment
- communication and speech impairment
- behavioural and emotional disorders
- specific learning disabilities
- severe learning disabilities

In practical work with pupils with special educational needs, there has been a shift from the use of medical diagnosis to a description of how a pupil functions. Special education should be based on the possibilities in the pupil's abilities rather than focused on weaknesses. A 'handicap' is described as a discrepancy between the capabilities of the individual and the functions demanded of him or her by society in areas which are essential to the establishment of independence and a social life. This means that changes in society may reduce a person's handicap.

Assessment

The overall aim is to identify children with special educational needs as early as possible. All local health centres co-operate with the educational-psychological service centres, so many children with special educational needs are identified before they start school.

Health service, kindergartens, schools and parents can ask the educational-psychological service centre for help. Before the centre can write an expert report about the child's needs, the parents have to give their written approval. The expert report has to contain reasons why a child needs special education and describes the content of the special education, the extent and how the education ought to be organised. The school then works out an individual plan. This plan must take into consideration the advice of the pedagogical psychological service centre, but also adapt the special education to the curriculum taught to the rest of the class. The

expert report gives advice to the municipality on how the measures taken for the pupil can ensure that s/he will get an equivalent education to that of pupils without special educational needs. If the municipality has professional reasons for not following the advice, these reasons must be documented.

As special education is decided by an individual decision, parents can make a complaint if they are not satisfied with the special education provided for their child at the National educational offices.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

For the majority of pupils with special educational needs, special education is provided at the mainstream school to which the pupil belongs, most often within his or her own class. The pupils may also be taught in small groups together with other pupils with special educational needs, or individually. For many pupils a combination of these organisation models is practised.

Until 1992, Norway had 40 national schools for special education. As a part of the re-organisation of special education, 20 have been closed and 20 of the former national special schools have been changed into resource centres. There are resource centres for pupils with certain disabilities including visual and hearing impairment, dyslexia, behavioural and emotional disorders, severe learning difficulties and mental disabilities. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, four regional resource centres have been established for persons born both deaf and blind. An autism programme and a national resource centre for MBD/ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome and Narcolepsy have also been started. For Northern Norway, a special development programme has been initiated.

The support system for mainstream schools consists of the educational psychological service (270) and the national resource centres.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

The national average of pupils receiving special education after an individual decision is about 6.5%. However, there are variations between counties and municipalities concerning how many pupils receive special education after an individual decision (1.6% to 19%). The variations do not reflect differences in the incidence of special educational needs, but differences in organisation of provisions on regional level. Schools with a lot of variation in pedagogical methods include more pupils in the mainstream class education.

In Norway in 1996 about 0.5% of all pupils (7 - 15 years) followed special education in special classes in mainstream school, or in special schools. The total

number of pupils from seven to 15 years old is 478,500; of these about 31,000 receive some form of special education. Only a small number of pupils are educated in special classes (n = 654) or special schools (n = 1,856).

Pupils with special educational needs in segregated provision are placed in the following school types:

specific schools and environmental schools	431
municipality schools for social and emotional probles	202
municipality schools for severe learning difficulties	700
schools in child care institutions	130
schools in institutions for drug addicts and alcoholics	46
national schools for deaf and deaf-blind	325
national schools for mentally retarded	22
total number of children in special schools	1,856

These statistics show that very few pupils with special educational needs get their education outside the mainstream school system. In the big cities and in densely populated municipalities special classes and municipal special schools are more common than in areas with a scattered population.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The Norwegian national curriculum for the compulsory school system consists of three parts. The first is the core curriculum for primary, lower and upper secondary schools and adult education. The second part consists of principles and guidelines for basic school education, showing the connection between the general principles and the third part of the national curriculum. This third part consists of the subject syllabi, which describe the goals and the content of the education. From 1997, there have been special syllabi for deaf pupils based upon the principle that sign language is their first language.

The curriculum is based on the principles of integration, participation and decentralisation. The curriculum caters for pupils with special educational needs by making local and individual adaptations possible. When it comes to subject syllabi, schools have to work out individual plans for pupils with special

educational needs. In this plan, the school must take into account the goals and the content of the mainstream subject syllabi for the class and make the adaptations needed for each pupil. This plan must also take into consideration the advice of the pedagogical psychological service. The ministry will publish a guideline on how to make individual plans for pupils with special educational needs shortly.

Teacher training

All teachers receive introductory courses in special education and support services in their initial training. Half a year of special education is required in the initial teacher training. There are also mainstream in-service training programmes on special education issues.

Special education is offered as an upgrading course. Many colleges offer two years of training in special education on a full-time or part-time basis. The Institute for Special Education at the University of Oslo offers training at masters and doctorate levels. About 16% of the teachers in compulsory schools have studied special education one year or more in addition to their initial training.

The focus in the training for special education teachers is on different special educational topics and on preventive work and counselling. There are no special programmes focused on integration.

Teacher attitudes

Results of a research project of the Institute for Special Education of the University of Oslo show that teachers often feel unable to meet the needs of pupils with learning disabilities and pupils with behavioural problems. Another evaluation study showed that most teachers think that pupils with special educational needs get an education equivalent to the mainstream education. Teachers consider social integration the main problem area in integration and inclusion.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Due to the fact that the number of special schools is very limited, they play no important role in the integration process. In Norway, the support system for mainstream schools is not based on support from special schools or visiting teachers. The support system consists of the educational psychological services and the resource centres.

Parents

The parents must give their written approval before the educational-psychological service can investigate the special educational needs of their child and give advice on the help the child needs. The parent must also give their approval before a child can be placed in a special school.

Most parents want their child to be included in the mainstream school system. Only a majority of parents of deaf children prefer segregation. The argument is that deaf pupils also have the right in an environment where they can communicate in their first language, sign language.

Part two of the national curriculum describes the importance of co-operation of parents. Where pupils with special educational needs are concerned, co-operation with their parents is particularly important in arriving at the best overall educational course and at shared understanding of what efforts and progress can be expected of the pupils. Co-operation with parents is also important in connection with the individual adaptation of teaching for pupils from linguistic and cultural minorities.

An evaluation study showed that most parents had a more positive view than teachers. They did not consider the social integration problem as important as teachers did. Their children felt comfortable at school.

Society has a mainly positive attitude towards integration. Most people are familiar with the principles of equality and participation. However, there are still some voices arguing for more segregation. One argument for segregation is the pupil's need to meet other children with the same problems. Another argument is that mainstream schools have limited competence and resources to integrate pupils with severe emotional and behavioural problems.

Barriers to integration

The Programme Board for the Research Programme (a research programme initiated by the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs) has emphasised certain major problem areas concerning integration and participation in the mainstream school system for pupils with special educational needs. Among others it was felt that the co-operation between the educational system and health care could be improved in Norway.

As previously mentioned there are some voices that advocate more segregation in Norway; this is especially the case with pupils who are deaf and pupils severe emotional and behavioural problems.

3.13 Portugal

Integration policy

Until the 1970's, the education of pupils with special educational needs in Portugal was provided in institutional settings. A clear policy of integration of pupils with sensory and physical handicaps in mainstream education started in the middle of the 70's. In this period the Special Education Service was established in the Ministry of Education. This department created Special Education Teams - a service of itinerant/peripatetic teachers - in order to support pupils with different handicaps in mainstream schools. However, it was only after the publication of the General Comprehensive Law for Education (1986) and the Decree of 1991, that legal instruments were established which guarantee the rights of handicapped children to education and access to mainstream schools. The Comprehensive Law prescribed 9 years of compulsory education and stated that special education is mainly established by diversified models of integration and in certain severe cases special education can take place in specific institutions. From 1990 onwards, education has been compulsory for pupils with special educational needs.

Educational support for pupils with special educational needs is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, although there are still some special schools under the responsibility of the Solidarity and Social Assistance Ministry (special schools run by private non-profit making organisations, the so-called Social Solidarity Institutions - IPPS). The Ministry of Education has also some agreements with private (profit and non-profit making) special schools. The schools and the support teachers are managed by five Regional Education Directions in Portugal.

From an historical perspective, the care of pupils with special educational needs has developed from a segregated approach into a more integrative approach, with the placement of special teachers in mainstream schools. The Support Education Services are more and more viewed as an educational support and resource service for mainstream schools. Special institutions are thus being transformed into specific resource centres that offer support to the educational and social community.

An important law that established the principles of special educational, is the Decree 319 of 1991. This legislation settles that the pupil should attend his home school and establishes the placement of the pupil in the least restrictive environment. This implied a complete change of paradigms in Portugal. The assessment of special educational needs is now education-based instead of based

upon a medical or therapeutic model. To put this into practice the school can initiate several activities in order to influence positively the process of learning of pupils with special educational needs, such as special remedial equipment, special assessment conditions and flexibility of the curriculum. The law establishes for the first time the Individual Education Plan (IEP), to be elaborated by the Psycho-pedagogical Services (SPO).

After a period of debate, a new law was created in 1997 (Law 105, 1st July, 1997). Through this law, the organisation of special needs education changed, defining support teachers in the school as a resource service, working directly with the school board and co-operating with mainstream teachers in diversifying educational approaches and strategies in order to improve pupils' learning.

In Portugal there are now 187 Support Education Co-ordination Teams, whose functions are the co-ordination of different services in the area, the detection of special educational needs and the organisation of the support in order to improve the diversification of pedagogical practices.

At the moment some projects are run by the co-ordination teams in Portugal in order to develop co-operation between local services concerning health, social services, work and education (special schools), for example in the field of early intervention, or transition to active life.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

Until the 1980s, it was a custom to classify handicaps in categories that were based on medical concepts. In the 1980s, the concept of specific educational needs was introduced, classifying handicaps more on an educational basis. Pupils with specific educational needs are described as pupils that demand special resources and/or adaptations in their learning process.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Portugal provides education for pupils with special educational needs both in mainstream school and in special schools. Integrated teaching of pupils with special educational needs is organised by schools with the Support Co-ordination Team of the area. In 1997, there were 187 of these teams, and 116 special schools under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Next to these facilities, 105 special schools were managed by the Solidarity and Social Assistance Ministry.

The special schools, under the management of the Ministry of Education, can be divided in 85 Co-operative non-profit making institutions (the so-called 'CERCI') and 31 profit making institutions ('Colégios'). In special education

provision, under the heading of the Ministry of Education, almost 6,200 teachers were involved in the support of pupils with special educational needs in integrated education.

Although there is a clear integration policy in Portugal, sometimes special classes emerge within the system. In total there are about 200 special classes, which are especially attended (full-time or part-time) by deaf and multi-handicapped pupils.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In Portugal about 45,000 pupils (2.7% of the total population of 1.7 million in the same age group) were in 1996 registered as pupils with special educational needs. Within the model of integrated education, about 36,000 pupils were recognised as having special educational needs.

The total number of pupils with special educational needs in special schools and institutions is about 9,000 (0.5%), more or less evenly spread over the two involved Ministries. Together with the (unknown) number of pupils in the 200 special classes, one can estimate the percentage of segregated pupils in Portugal at the highest at 0.7%, but in reality probably less.

In the next table the numbers of pupils in the different forms of provision are presented.

Number of pupils with special educational needs across the different services (1996)

	number of pupils
Ministry of Education	
Co-ordination teams	36,519
Co-operatives and associations	2,443
Private profit making institutions	2,272
Solidarity and Social Assistance Ministry	
Official institutions	1,246
Private Social Solidarity institutions	3,223
Total	45,703

In the next table the percentages of pupils within the integration model (special education teams) are given across the different categories of special educational needs.

Pupils in integrated settings by type of special educational needs (1995/96)

Total	36,519
of which:	
hearing	5.7%
visual	2.6 %
mental	22.6%
motor	7.0%
learning diff.	46.0%
emotional problems	11.5%
multiple hand	1.3%
chron. diseases	3.2%

It shows that the percentage of pupils with special educational needs, integrated through the special education teams, is much higher in basic education (from six to 15 years) than in secondary education, or pre-school education. In pre-school education the percentage is about 2%, in basic education 2.6% and in secondary education 0.35%.

Compared to 1993/1994 the total number of pupils with special educational needs is increasing: in 1995/96 there were 5,000 pupils more registered as having special educational needs than in 1994. This is due to an increase in the number of integrated pupils, since the number of segregated pupils remained fairly stable. The number of special schools remains significant, although with lower numbers of pupils, mainly due to the fact that special schools offer complementary leisure and social activities, which is difficult for mainstream schools.

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

Pupils with special educational needs should follow the mainstream school curriculum as much as possible. If the Psycho-pedagogical team concludes that this is not possible, there are several options. Depending on the specific individual needs, a specific educational plan is developed, where adaptations can be made, varying from simple changes of aims and/or contents to an alternative individual curriculum that leads to a diploma of specific competencies.

Teacher training

In Portugal there is a national programme for in-service training of teachers with the support of the European Commission (FOCO), through which local actions for mainstream and support teachers are implemented, as well as for directors of establishments, inspectors and other experts and educational key persons.

Several institutions are allowed to organise in-service training, such as schools for higher education and universities and several other teacher-training institutes. In 1996, the Ministry of Education organised in-service training of teachers in very specific areas, such as early intervention, multiple handicaps, cognitive problems, communication problems, sign language, low vision, orientation and mobility, Braille code, transition to active life and educational orientation.

Teacher attitudes

In general, teachers in mainstream education are open-minded concerning the integration of pupils with special educational needs. However, sometimes the integration process reveals some difficulties that could be overcome by improved conditions.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Special schools have adopted a clear attitude to support the social and educational integration process of pupils with special educational needs. The special schools develop an increasing number of activities to support integration such as projects of co-operation with mainstream schools, sharing special technical resources and developing complementary activities.

Parents

In Portugal, parents generally express a positive attitude towards the integration of their children in mainstream schools. However, parents seem to remain passive, because special schools offer an attractive set of activities, like transport and activities with a social character (leisure time activities) so the pupils can spend more time at school than in mainstream schools.

Society is more and more prepared to accept the integration of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools.

Barriers to integration

Although there is a widespread acceptance of integration in Portugal, there are still some obstacles for achieving integration of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools in Portugal, such as some physical and architectonic obstacles.

3.14 Spain

Integration policy

In Spain, the integration of pupils with disability-related special educational needs started with an experimental educational integration programme in 1985. This integration programme covered placement of no more than two pupils with special educational needs per class and the maintenance of a ratio of 25 pupils per teacher in groups with pupils with special educational needs. Also, this programme included preferential attention from the educational and psycho-pedagogical guidance teams (EOEP) and allocation of material resources and extraordinary financial credit lines.

After three academic years, the experiment was evaluated. Since the results were found positive, the programme was extended to a larger number of schools to cover the real demand for education of pupils with special educational needs. In 1995, it was established that all public-funded schools would be obliged to provide education for pupils with special educational needs. Integration is no longer an experimental programme, it has been extended to as many public-funded schools as required, according to pre-planning designed to meet the needs of pupils for educational provision.

Integration covers infant education, primary education, compulsory secondary education, baccalaureate, vocational training and adaptations and reservations of university places. Integration was extended to compulsory secondary education in 1996/97. Another recent innovation is the extension of the term 'special educational needs' to gifted children. Intellectual high achieving pupils are now included within the framework of pupils with special educational needs.

In Spain, the so-called 'guide to integration' is used: a document that lists all integration schools and available resources in the area managed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This guide has recently been updated.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

In Spain, pupils with special educational needs are defined as pupils who, for a period during or throughout their schooling, require specific special-purpose educational support and attention as they suffer from physical, mental or sensory disabilities, have severe behavioural disorders or are in underprivileged social or cultural situations.

Six categories of disabilities are distinguished:

- mental
- severe personality disorders/ autism
- sight
- hearing
- motor
- multiple impairment

Assessment

Psycho-pedagogical assessment is conducted by educational and psycho-pedagogical guidance teams (EOEP) or by school guidance departments. The assessment is based upon the pupil's interaction with the contents and materials to be learnt, the teacher, the peers in the classroom and school and the family. If a pupil is not in school, the interaction of the pupil with his or her social setting is assessed. In the assessment different procedures, techniques and instruments are used such as observations, protocols for the assessment of curriculum abilities, questionnaires, psycho-pedagogical tests, interviews, and reviews of schoolwork.

The EOEP issues the 'opinion on schooling' that consists of conclusions of the process of psycho-pedagogical assessment, guidance on the proposed curriculum, the opinion of the parents and a reasoned proposal for educational provision, depending on the needs of the pupil and the characteristics and possibilities of the schools in the catchment area. The proposal may refer to special education schools or mainstream schools and is subject to a process of monitoring and periodical review.

After the EOEP issues the 'opinion on schooling', the Educational Inspectorate issues the report. The last step is that the Provincial Directorate, or the educational provision committee, hands down the decision.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Special education schools provide education for pupils who, according to the assessment and opinion handed down by EOEP, require significant and extreme adaptations of the official curriculum for which they are eligible on the basis of their age. Special education schools provide for pupils whose special educational needs are so complex that they cannot be catered for in a mainstream school and contribute to maximising the quality of life of these pupils.

There are boarding schools to accommodate pupils who live far away from the special education school. The so-called 'concerted special schools' are private

centres that are financed with public funds. Under some circumstances, in rural areas special classrooms are set up in mainstream schools. These are referred to as special education school substitute classrooms.

In Spain there are about 230 special facilities. They can be categorised as follows:

state special schools (CPEE)	74
special education school substitute classrooms	50
concerted special education schools	97
private special education schools	11

The pupils that have less severe difficulties are educated in mainstream infant/primary and secondary education schools. All public-funded schools are obliged to provide education for pupils with special educational needs, two pupils per class.

The Ministry of Education and Culture provides these schools with human resources who are responsible for providing support to pupils with special educational needs. This group of professionals consists of specialised therapeutic pedagogic teachers, specialised hearing and language teachers, specialised physical education teachers, technical vocational training teachers, assistant technical educators, physiotherapists, nursing officers, educators and doctors. Some of these professionals are itinerant/peripatetic, they are based at one school and serve other schools from there. There are 4,000 specialised therapeutic teachers and specialised hearing and language teachers.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

The following statistics show the number of pupils with special educational needs that are integrated in mainstream education (1995/96) and the number of pupils that attend special education schools (1995/96).

Number of pupils with SEN integrated in mainstream education

infant/primary	88,405
compulsory sec. education	2,741
baccalaureate	146
BUP/COU	468
vocational training	1,114
soc. guarantee/voc. initiation	324
vocational modules	78
Total	93,276

The majority of these integrated pupils (more than 70%) are labelled as mental handicapped.

The number of pupils in special education schools is as follows:

	state	private
mental	8,572	256
serious disorders	1,442	105
hearing	732	30
visual	369	-
multiple handicap	2,618	222
others	5,716	-
Total	19,449	613

The total number of children in education is 6,805,822.

On the basis of these figures, one can conclude the following:

- In Spain about 1.7% of all pupils are recognised as having special educational needs
- The majority of these are educated within the mainstream school (1.4%)
- Only 0.3% is educated in segregated settings

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

The mainstream curriculum can be adapted to the type of the pupil's needs. The adaptations can be significant and modify compulsory contents of different areas of the curriculum and affect general objectives and respective criteria of assessment. All significant personalised curriculum adaptations (ACIS) are written down in a document and this document is attached to the assessment process documents. The personalised curriculum adaptations serve as a basis for decisions on supplementary support.

Teacher training

Teacher training is provided on diverse aspects such as school organisation, pupils' care, adaptations and assessment. The attitude of teachers towards integration is generally favourable, although integration has been a long process with difficulties that had to be overcome.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Special education schools must co-operate with all schools and educational services in the catchment area they are located in. The experience of the professionals of special schools and the resources of these schools, should be made public and used in helping pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools. Combined schooling experiments between special education schools and mainstream schools are promoted.

Parents

Some parents are enthusiastic advocates of integration, and others still defend the existence of special-purpose schools as the only means of providing education for pupils with special educational needs. In general, both parents and society have reached satisfactory levels of acceptance of integration.

3.15 Sweden

Integration policy

The Swedish Education Act stipulates equal access to equivalent education for all children and young persons, regardless of sex, geographical location and social and economic circumstances. The act states that education must 'give the pupils' knowledge and skills, and in partnership with homes, promote their balanced development into responsible individuals and members of society'. Allowance must be made for pupils with special educational needs. The Education Act is supplemented with special ordinances for various types of schools such as regulations for those with disabilities.

The state and local authorities have the responsibility for education in Sweden. The Swedish parliament and government have defined a national curriculum for compulsory basic schools.

The local authorities receive all financial resources for education and are responsible for the division of these resources. Local authorities are also responsible for running the day-to-day activities of the schools to ensure that these goals are achieved. An education plan has to be adopted, describing how school activities are funded, organised, developed and evaluated. The head teacher of each individual school has the task of drawing up a local working plan based upon curricula, the national objectives and the education plan. The National Agency for Education has the task of developing, evaluating, following up and supervising public sector schooling in Sweden as well as putting forward proposals for development of the schools.

Since the late 1950's, an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs have been integrated into mainstream schools. In 1997, most pupils with special educational needs were taught in mainstream compulsory basic schools. Within mainstream schools special teaching groups are also organised for pupils with functional impairments and for pupils with social and emotional problems. There are special schools for deaf and hearing-impaired pupils and for vision impaired and speech or language impaired pupils. Municipalities run a special programme for pupils with severe learning disabilities. Education for these pupils takes place in special classes.

Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps

In Sweden, pupils with various difficulties are considered pupils with special educational needs. The difficulties of pupils are categorised in terms of physical

impairments, visual impairments, deaf and hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, learning difficulties, multi-handicapped, dyslexia, autism, ADHD, speech impairments and medical handicaps.

This attention for medical definitions of problems is changing into a focus on the consequences of the impairment rather than on the impairment itself. Focusing upon the consequences of impairment, one discovers that the problems of everyday life are often the same for different impairments.

In 1980, the World Health Organisation published an analysis that distinguished impairments, disabilities and handicaps. This distinction has, in Sweden, a growing impact within education. It implies that a handicap always has to be defined in terms of the relationship between the individual and his or her environment.

Assessment

The advisers of The National Swedish Agency for Special Needs Education (SIH) can conduct qualified pedagogical investigations in those cases where local specialists or parents have agreed that investigation is necessary after consulting the advisers. Parents of children in the compulsory age have the right to choose a school their child will attend, within reasonable economic and organisational restrictions.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs

A pupil who has difficulties following class instruction can receive various forms of support. A remedial teacher can support the pupil in the classroom, or can teach the pupil in a special group outside the classroom. Within mainstream schools special teaching groups are also organised for pupils with functional impairments and for pupils with social and emotional problems.

Municipalities run a special programme for pupils with severe learning disabilities. Education for these pupils takes place in special classes. Pupils who are ill for a longer period can be taught in a hospital or at home. There are special schools for deaf and hearing-impaired pupils, and for visually impaired and speech or language impaired children. In the next table the types and numbers of special schools in Sweden are given.

Number of special schools (1995/96)

schools for deaf and hard-of-hearing	5
school for deaf pupils with learning disabilities	1
school for hearing-impaired pupils with behavioural problems or language disorders	1
school for visually impaired	1

The National Swedish Agency for Special Needs Education (SIH) is responsible for providing special pedagogical support to pupils, parents, schools, and local authorities so that pupils with functional impairments will receive the best possible education. This support focuses on pupils with vision impairments, physical impairments, immigrant pupils with disabilities and pupils with multiple disabilities. The SIH works closely with the hearing clinics at the county hospitals regarding pedagogical support to hearing-impaired pupils.

The principal focus of the special advisers' operations is that they initiate plans and actions that will minimise handicaps. The advisers provide information and support, and develop and evaluate individual action programmes. The advisers can also conduct qualified pedagogical investigations in those cases where local specialists or parents have agreed that investigation is necessary after consulting the advisers. Very often these investigations are followed by professional development of the staff working with the pupil. In addition, the advisers offer supplementary materials such as professional guidance and adapted educational materials.

Number of pupils with special educational needs

In the next table the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream and special education are given.

The data shows that in Sweden there are about 16,000 pupils who are registered as pupils with special educational needs. This is about 1.7% of all children of the compulsory age group. Of these 1.7% about 0.8% are educated in the mainstream and 0.9% in a special group/class or school.

Pupils with SEN in mainstream education (1995/96)

blind pupils	95
visually impaired pupils	798
deaf pupils	57
hard-of-hearing pupils	2,318
physically impaired pupils (brain injury)	1,308
physically impaired pupils (other reason)	1,235
pupils with learning difficulties	
getting their education in the same group as pupils without disabilities	1,043
getting their education in a special group but in mainstream education	305
getting their education on their own but in mainstream education	76
getting their education in a special programme	8,119

Pupils in special school (1995/96)

deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils	569
deaf pupils with learning disabilities	43
deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils with behavioural or language problems	111
visually impaired	43
Total number of pupils with special needs	16,120
total number pupils compulsory school	938,900

Curriculum and teaching

Curriculum

Sweden has a national curriculum, which is defined by the parliament and the government. In July 1995, a new national curriculum for compulsory basic school came into operation. It defines the underlying values and the basic objectives and guidelines of the school system. In addition, there is a nationally defined syllabus

for each subject. Thus, all compulsory schools follow the same national curriculum. The aim is to ensure integration, with the exception of deaf pupils. The current curriculum does not use the word mainstreaming, but takes for granted that all pupils will be educated in mainstream classes. If this is not possible, the school has to indicate why another solution is chosen for some pupils.

For each pupil with special educational needs, an individual education plan has to be worked out by the teacher in consultation with the pupil, their parents and the remedial teacher. This plan will be evaluated continuously.

Teacher training

Legislation from 1988 states that all compulsory schoolteachers must complete the equivalent of half a term studies of special pedagogy. In addition, there is a three-term specialist training programme 'special education supplementary training'. The remedial teacher can give the mainstream teacher support and guidance in teaching pupils with special educational needs.

Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration

Special schools

Some special schools have resource centres for pupils with visual problems, language disorders or for pupils with multiple disabilities. At these resource centres courses are offered to personnel working with pupils with special educational needs.

Parents

The parliament has decided that local authorities, over a five-year trial period, transfer certain responsibilities and decision-making processes to local boards with a majority of parents.

Swedish people in general agree that all children with special educational needs have the right to a personal development and education equal to other children. The Swedish society has a positive attitude towards integration.

4 General overview

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the focus will be upon the general findings concerning provision for pupils with special educational needs in Europe. The approach taken is not country-wise, as in the preceding chapter, but subject-wise. In the next sections, information will be provided upon: the level of policy-making in Europe (4.2); definitions of handicaps or special educational needs and assessment (4.3); provision for pupils with special educational needs (4.4); the number of pupils with special educational needs (4.5); the curriculum and the teacher (4.6); the role of the special school (4.7); the role of parents and attitudes in society in general (4.8) and, finally, on barriers to integration (4.9).

In Chapter Five specific attention is paid to a number of central themes concerning the integration of pupils with special educational needs and to the recent developments and trends in Europe.

4.2 Policies across Europe

In the last decade major legislative innovations in the education for pupils with special educational needs have taken place in a number of European countries. Whilst in some countries (*Italy*, *Norway*, *Sweden* and *Denmark* for example) there is more or less a continuation of ongoing integration policies without major or abrupt changes, in other countries there is talk of more 'revolutionary' changes compared to the preceding period. Below, short descriptions are given of the relevant adaptations made to legislation concerning special educational needs education in Europe during the last seven or eight years.

In *Austria*, the Parliament passed in 1993 a law making integration possible in primary schools. Before 1993, special schools had been obligatory for pupils with certified special educational needs. Since the law of 1993, parents have been allowed to choose between a mainstream primary school (integration) and a special school. In December 1996 - and paralleling the legalisation of the integration within primary schools - the Parliament passed the law legalising the continuation of integration on the lower level of secondary schools.

In *Belgium*, until 1997, legislation for mainstream and special education was

separate, but since the law of February 1997 on primary education, mainstream and special primary education are integrated in the same legal framework. Within this law, the principle of integration is highlighted and defined in terms of co-operation between mainstream and special primary education. It enables pupils with special educational needs to participate in the curriculum and activities in a mainstream school, on a temporary or permanent basis, completely or partially with help from a special school.

Secondary education still has separate legislation for mainstream and special education. It is the aim of the Minister to have an integrated legislation regarding secondary education in the near future.

In *England and Wales*, the present position concerning special educational needs provision is grounded in the Education Acts of 1981, 1993 and 1996. The commitment to integration has been affected by the Educational Reform Act of 1988 and subsequent developments such as changes to the resourcing of education: most of the education budgets of local authorities are delegated to schools who may use them as they wish, subject to statutory obligations. Also, area (local authority) policies have declined as schools have gained a greater degree of autonomy. Furthermore, the right of parents to choose the school their child attends has been extended to parents of children with special educational needs. Also the 'Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs' has been implemented. The Code of Practice recommends a five stage model of assessing special educational needs. In the first stage, the mainstream class teacher identifies or registers a pupil's special educational needs and takes action after consultation with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator. In stage two, the school's special educational needs co-ordinator takes responsibility for gathering information and for co-ordinating the pupil's special educational needs, in collaboration with the pupil's mainstream teacher. In the third stage, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the mainstream teacher are supported by specialists, external to the school. In step four, the local educational authority considers the need for statutory assessment and makes a multi-disciplinary assessment, if appropriate. In the final stage, the local educational authority considers the need for a statement of special educational needs and, if appropriate, draws up a statement.

In *Finland*, the Comprehensive School Act (1983) places an obligation upon the municipalities to provide comprehensive school teaching for all pupils of compulsory school age within its territory, or when this fails, to make provisions for all pupils to receive instruction corresponding to mainstream comprehensive

school. The municipality can discharge this obligation by collaborating with other municipalities, or by engaging other educational institutes such as the state-owned special schools. The Act does not categorise pupils in types of handicaps. It is the duty of the municipality and the individual school to integrate pupils with special educational needs into the mainstream educational system. Educational, social and health authorities must co-operate in arranging instruction for pupils with special educational needs. The first option of providing special education is to integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream classes and when necessary provide special education in small teaching groups. Only when this is not feasible is the second option considered: the provision of special education in a special group, class, or school. Furthermore, the Finnish government has approved a Development Plan for the period 1995 -2000. Focusing upon special education, it attempts to improve the operational organisation and integration practices of special education at the regional, municipal, school, and individual pupil level, as well as to gather information on the success and feasibility of integration practices. A further goal is to enhance the identification of pupils in need of special help, as well as to enhance their access to appropriate support and instruction.

Also in *France*, there is a clear emphasis on the mainstream school as the first option when dealing with special educational needs. Included in the law of 1989 there was a redefinition of the concept of educational rights and integration was clearly defined as the most favourable option: every child from the age of three onwards should be allowed to attend education in his or her neighbourhood.

In *Germany*, educational legislation and administration of the educational system are primarily the responsibilities of the 'Länder'. However, central 'KMK'-resolutions made some clear recommendations: In 1988, the KMK decided that the system of special educational needs should be more flexible. Terminology changed from 'the need for special education' (in a special school) to 'special educational needs'. In 1994, the KMK stated in a recommendation that the education of disabled pupils should be a co-operative task of all schools and that special education should be understood as a necessary resource for general education. Nearly all 'Länder' have adapted their educational laws in line with this recommendation of the KMK.

In *Greece* the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs is now drafting a Bill in which it is explicitly stated that pupils with special educational needs should be integrated into general, trade and technical education. Under this Bill, measures are taken and services provided at all levels of education. The measures include the development and implementation of special programmes and teaching methods, as

well as the improvement of the availability of special materials, instruments and other equipment. The special classes are renamed integration classes, expressing that the main purpose is to support pupils with special educational needs to become fully integrated into mainstream classes.

In *the Netherlands* in 1990 the government policy document, 'Together to School Again' was intended to make a fresh start in integrating pupils with special educational needs. Under this policy, all primary schools and special schools for learning disabled and educable mentally retarded pupils were grouped into regional clusters. Recently, Parliament decided that each of the 300 school clusters would be funded equally, based on the total enrolment in primary education. About 50% of this amount will be transferred directly to existing special provisions and the other half will be allocated to the school cluster. This will be implemented from 1998 on and in 2003 the new funding structure should be fully operational. All this will be incorporated in new legislation of 1998: then the law on primary education (including special education) will come into force.

In addition for schools in the secondary education sector, major changes are planned: a restructuring of lower forms of mainstream secondary education and secondary special education has been proposed, resulting in four types of instructional programmes, one of which is the preparation for the labour market. Next to these programmes an individual support structure (for pupils with special educational needs) will be developed. In line with the integration policy for the primary special schools, schools for the lower forms of secondary education and schools for secondary special education have to work together in school clusters, starting from January 1999 onwards.

For the education of pupils with sensory, physical, or mental disabilities or behavioural problems a separate line of policy development has recently been started. Recent government reports propose that the financing mechanism (funding special schools on the basis of the number of children that are placed) should be stopped in favour of linking financing of special services to the pupil involved, regardless of the type of schooling. The idea is to change from a supply-oriented financing to a demand-oriented financing system. If a pupil meets the criteria for this so-called 'pupil-bound budget', parents and pupils can choose a school, special or mainstream and take part in deciding how to use the funding.

In *Norway*, since 1975, there has been no specific legislation regarding the field of special education.

In *Portugal*, through the publication of the General Comprehensive Law for Education (1986) and the Decree of 1991, legal instruments were established that

guarantee the rights of handicapped pupils to education and access to mainstream schools. The Comprehensive Law states that special education is mainly provided via various models of integration in mainstream settings. Special schools are more and more viewed as educational support and resource centres for the mainstream schools. Special institutions are thus being transformed into specific resource centres that offer support to the educational and social community. An important law that established these special educational principles is the decree of 1991, in which it was emphasised that pupils should be placed in the least restrictive environment, in accordance with their special educational needs.

Through more recent legislation (1997), the organisation of special educational needs education was changed, defining support teachers in schools as a resource service, working directly with the school board and co-operating with mainstream teachers in differentiating educational approaches and strategies in order to improve pupils' learning.

In *Spain*, in 1995 it was established that all publicly funded schools were obliged to provide education for pupils with special educational needs. Integration is no longer an experimental programme, but has been extended to as many publicly funded schools as required to meet the educational needs of pupils. Integration covers infant education, primary education, compulsory secondary education, baccalaureate, vocational training and adaptations and reservations of university places. Integration was also extended to compulsory secondary education in 1996/97. Another recent innovation is the extension of the term 'special educational needs' to gifted children. Intellectually high-achieving pupils are now included within the framework of pupils with special educational needs.

Summary

As is clear from the country descriptions in Chapter Three, in *Sweden*, *Denmark*, *Italy* and *Norway*, clear integration policies have been previously developed and implemented. In these countries, major legislative choices were made years ago; important changes have not occurred in the subsequent years. In most of the other countries huge legislative changes can be identified. A few changes are indicated below:

* Some countries defined during the 1980s their special education system as a resource for mainstream schools. More countries now follow that approach, for example Germany, Finland, Greece, Portugal and the Netherlands.
* Parental choice has become a topic for legislative changes in Austria, the Netherlands and England and Wales.

* Countries with separate laws for special and mainstream education, like the Netherlands and Belgium, are now developing one legal framework for both educational systems.
* Countries like France and Finland clearly express integration as the first option for pupils with special educational needs.
* Decentralisation of provision for pupils with special educational needs is a topic in legislation in Finland (municipalities), England and Wales (schools) and the Netherlands (school clusters).
* The change of funding of special needs education is an important innovation in the Netherlands.
* Legislation concerning special needs education during the secondary school age phase is now being developed or has recently been developed in the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria and Spain.

4.3 Definitions and Assessment

Austria distinguishes 10 categories of special educational needs. Until recently, the entrance of a pupil into a special school was preceded by a decision of the district school board, either via application of the parents, or on application of the head of the school, or as a result of the board's own motion. Before taking such a decision, the district board had to obtain the expert opinion of the head of the special school in question and, if necessary of a school doctor and a school psychologist (only with consent of the parents). An appeal from the decision of the district school board could be made at the provincial school board. This provincial school board could also order the submission of a psycho-pedagogical opinion. Since 1993, this procedure is still legal, but with a few modifications. The most important modification is the legal possibility of parents to choose either a special school or a mainstream school for their child with special educational needs. Other modifications are that parents have the possibility to present expert opinions themselves and that the district school board has to counsel the parents regarding the pupil's special educational needs, possibilities within the school system and additional aids.

In *Belgium (French and Flemish Community)*, special education is divided into eight types or pedagogical settings. Regardless of the type of special education, secondary education is divided in four educational tracks that differ mainly in the aims of education. The first track aims at contributing to an active and worthwhile life for those who are unable to take part in active work life even in a sheltered workshop, because of the seriousness of their handicap. Track two provides work training in order to enable pupils to integrate in a sheltered/protected work

environment. Track three provides pupils with general and social training plus vocational training. Pupils are prepared for integration in a normal employment and living environment. The training is comparable with standard vocational education. Track four provides secondary education similar to the general, technical, vocational, or artistic curriculum of mainstream full-time secondary education and is also structured in the same way. Pupils follow the programme of mainstream education under the condition that the educational methods are provided which are adapted to their special educational needs or that the time to succeed within the programme can be extended as required.

For the referral of a pupil to special education, two documents from a guidance centre are needed. The first document is a certificate stating that the pupil may benefit from special education, indicating the type, the level, and if appropriate the form of secondary special education the pupil needs. The second document justifies this certificate, and contains a synthesis of the psychological, medical, social, and pedagogical examination. This multidisciplinary report must conclude that a pupil has a real need to attend a special school.

Parents receive the certificate, which allows them to enrol their child in a school of their choice, which organises the specific type of special education their child requires. The certificate also contributes to the (individual) planning of the educational provision within the special school.

Admission to integrated education requires a certificate of acceptance, in the same way as for admission to special education. This certificate refers to an integration plan. This integration plan is the result of consultation amongst all parties involved: the pupil or his or her parents, the mainstream school, the school for special education and the counselling centres.

In *Denmark*, the law distinguishes mild and more severe special educational needs. The municipalities are responsible for provision for mild special educational needs and the counties for provision aimed at meeting the more severe needs.

Many attempts have been made to define special education. In recent years, efforts have been made to define the concept on the basis of the objective of a school for all. Special education constitutes the potential of the school to support pupils whose needs are not fully satisfied in the mainstream education process. However, a special education school is not supposed to be an alternative which exempts pupils from the general provisions of mainstream education. The goals of education apply to all pupils, but pupils can follow different tracks to get as close to these goals as possible.

If it is understood that if a pupil needs special education, or if the pupil's schooling causes concern in other respects, the pupil can be recommended for a pedagogic-psychological assessment. This recommendation is made by the class teacher, or the school health service, but the pupil's parents and the head of the school can also ask for an assessment. After consulting the parents, the head of the school sends the recommendation to the Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office. This Office assesses whether the pupil has a need for special education or other special-pedagogical assistance. The Office may discuss the pupil's situation with teachers or others who forwarded the recommendation and use the information to make proposals concerning arrangements that are considered appropriate.

When the Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office assesses a special need, a report is written. The parents must be informed of the content of the report. A recommendation for special needs education is made after consultation with the parents. The decision to begin special education or other special-pedagogic assistance is made by the school head. Only with strong, valid arguments can the Office or the school head overrule the parents when they do not agree with the need for special education for their child.

The Pedagogical-Psychological Advice Office monitors the development of those pupils who are referred for special education. At least once a year, the Office decides to continue, alter or stop the special educational provision.

In *England and Wales*, the Education Act 1993 states that a pupil has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A pupil has a learning difficulty if he or she:

* has a significant greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils at the same age
* has a disability which either prevents or hinders the pupil from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for pupils of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority
* is under five and falls within the first two definitions above or would do if special educational provision was not made for him or her.

Special educational provision means for a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the child's age and for a child under two, educational provision of any kind.

The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (DFE, 1994) recognises needs in eight categories. The

categories are not mutually exclusive: merely a guide to the identification and assessment of difficulties in learning and giving the opportunity for a broad description of the manifestation of difficulties in each of the categories. One of the criteria of need is failure to perform within the national curriculum.

The Code of practice recommends a five staged model of assessing special educational needs. The stages represent an ever-widening circle of support. In the first stage, the mainstream class teacher identifies, or registers a pupil's special educational needs and takes action after consultation with the school's special educational need co-ordinator (SENCO). In stage two, the SENCO takes responsibility for gathering information and for co-ordinating the pupil's special educational needs, in collaboration with the pupil's mainstream teacher. In the third, stage the SENCO and the mainstream teachers are supported by specialists, external to the school. In step four, the local educational authority considers the need for statutory assessment and makes a multidisciplinary assessment, if appropriate. In the final stage, the LEA considers the need for a statement of special educational needs and, if appropriate draws up a statement. Assessment is perceived as a continuous and flexible process in which regular monitoring, review and evaluation are required. Both parents and pupils are expected to be involved in all decision-making. Further, the Code of Practice stresses that early intervention is crucial, that needs may be influenced by school characteristics, that assessment should include all available information, that assessment instruments and procedures should be culturally neutral and that multi-professional agencies should collaborate.

In *Finland*, pupils are not categorised by legislation, but the classification and grouping for various sectors of special education is determined by educational needs of the pupils. Special educational needs are divided in nine basic categories.

Transferring a pupil to special education is possible when he or she cannot cope with studying in a mainstream class, or is otherwise unable to adjust to a mainstream class. In such cases, the pupil's parents must first be heard. When necessary, the pupil has to undergo a medical and psychological examination by an expert and a social report is made about the child and his or her circumstances.

In *France*, the Outline Law for Disabled People (June 30, 1975) is characterised by the fact that it does not define a disability or a disabled person. French legislators deliberately chose to proceed otherwise: they created a local body, the Commission Départementale d'Education Spéciale (CDES) which decides what financial or learning assistance measures are specifically allocated to each individual pupil. No action can be taken without prior consent of the child's parents. With this provision the only possible definition is the following: 'a disabled

child is a child for whom the CDES has taken a decision'. Another provision of the law should be stressed: CDES measures are never permanent and they are all time limited. Thus, the CDES can provide help for pupils who have a sensory, motor or mental disability, a chronic disease or disability. On the other hand, it is within the CDES brief to direct pupils only toward certain establishments and services (called medical-educational). As a result (as the CDES can only take decisions concerning a referral to medical and educational settings and services), other pupils can be guided towards institutions, or entrusted to various services either by a medical decision - in compliance with a ruling issued by a juvenile court judge who considers that they are 'in danger' - or in accordance with measures of 'social assistance to children'. These pupils also have 'specific needs', but their guidance is not determined by the CDES.

In *Germany* special education is classified into 10 categories. In practice, there are many problems in dealing with the categories as a lot of disabled pupils cannot be unquestionably classified and an increasing number of pupils are multiple handicapped.

The assessment of special educational needs is based upon multidisciplinary reports. If an institution makes an application for assessment, the parents of the child have to be informed and consulted. Parents can also make an application themselves, and can object to a placement decision.

Recently, the 'Länder' within Germany have discussed innovations in diagnostic criteria. The Recommendation passed by the KMK in 1994 clarifies the necessity of overcoming traditional categories of pupils with handicaps in favour of more differentiated approaches of support and individual development. Eight diagnosis key-elements for pupils with special educational needs were established: motor, perception, cognition, motivation, communication, interaction, emotion and creativity. The diagnosis of special educational needs contains a description of the individual special educational needs, the decision about the required process of education and the place of support. To ensure appropriate support measures, it is necessary to obtain a qualitative and quantitative profile that contains information concerning the pupil's: development of learning and behavioural strategies; perception; social relationships; ability to communicate and interact; their individual and educational circumstances in life; the school environment and its possibilities for change and the vocational environment.

In *Greece*, pupils with special educational needs are defined as pupils who have particular difficulties in learning, or in adapting to the environment in mainstream schools, because of physical, mental, psychological or social impairments.

Under the new law, the diagnostic process is assigned to the Centres for Diagnosis, Assessment and Consultative Support (KDAY). The purpose of the KDAY is to offer services in diagnosing, assessing and supporting all pupils and in particular pupils with special educational needs, by promoting and supporting their integration into mainstream schools. Another task is to support, inform, train and raise awareness amongst teachers, parents and society in general.

In *Italy*, a pupil is called 'handicapped' when her/his physical, psychological or sensory disability is steady or progressive, it causes difficulties in learning, relationships or integration into working life and is serious enough to give rise to social disadvantage or social exclusion.

Parents and health and social services collaborate in drawing up a functional-dynamic profile of the handicapped pupil based on a functional diagnosis. This profile is required to identify the way the curriculum has to be adapted to the particular needs of the pupil. Specialist teaching staff, for each level of education, help with the development of an adapted curriculum. The functional-dynamic profile describes the pupil's potential and the weaknesses from different angles. It points at the pupil's learning difficulties related to the particular kind of handicap and to individual skills, which should be encouraged and developed. The functional-dynamic profile is updated at the end of pre-school, primary and lower secondary education, as well as during upper secondary education.

In *the Netherlands*, the educational system distinguishes 12 types of special education. Although pupils are formally referred to special education by their parents, referrals are usually initiated by classroom teachers, in consultation with the school principal, the school support service and the parents. In general, the admission board of the special school (a psychologist, a physician, a social worker, the school principal) performs an extensive assessment in order to decide whether the pupil is eligible for special education. Two years after the admittance, a re-examination has to take place. The goals of this re-examination are the assessment of the results of the educational provision, of how the further development of the pupil's capacities can be realised and whether the pupil should be transferred to mainstream education or another type of special education. Referrals for primary special schools for pupils with learning disabilities; for educable mentally retarded pupils and for infants with developmental difficulties, is evaluated by a regional referral board. This board decides on the appropriateness of the referral on the basis of written material about the pupil and documented actions of the referring school. If the referral is considered appropriate, the admission board of a special school performs the assessment.

Currently, the procedures for referral and the role of the admission boards are increasingly being criticised. After admittance, pupils are hardly ever reintegrated into mainstream education. For decades, the assessment of a child's handicap focused upon a classification of kinds of handicap. Basically, the division into different types of special education can be interpreted as a consequence of the psycho-medical paradigm. Now, assessment also focuses upon the description of the problem a pupil has in the educational setting and assessment is always connected with the perspective of taking decisions about special support.

In *Norway*, the term 'special needs education' is used for pupils who are unable to function well following the ordinary course of studies. Pupils with special educational needs are not categorised in the law nor in the curriculum. The national resource centres and to some extent special teacher training are organised according to categories that are leftover from the old school system.

In practical work with pupils with special educational needs, there has been a shift from the use of medical diagnosis to a description of how a the pupil functions. Special education should be based on the possibilities in the pupil's abilities rather than focused on weaknesses. A 'handicap' is described as a discrepancy between the capabilities of the individual and the functions demanded of him or her by society in areas which are essential to the establishment of independence and a social life. This means that changes in society may reduce a person's handicap.

The overall aim is to identify pupils with special educational needs as early as possible. All local health centres co-operate with the educational-psychological service centres, so many children with special educational needs are identified before they start school. Health services, kindergartens, schools and parents can ask the educational-psychological service for help. Before the service can write an expert report about the pupil's needs, the parents have to give their written approval. The expert report has to give reasons why a pupil needs special education and describes the content of the special education, the extent of, as well as how the education ought to be organised. The school then works out an individual plan. This plan must take into consideration the advice of the pedagogical psychological service, but also adapt the special education to the curriculum taught to the rest of the class. The expert report gives advice to the municipality on how the measures taken for the pupil can ensure that he or she will get an equivalent educational to that of peers without special educational needs. If the municipality has professional reasons for not following the advice, these reasons must be documented.

As special education is decided by an individual decision, parents can make a complaint if they are not satisfied with the special education provided for their child at the National educational offices.

In *Portugal*, it was a custom to classify handicaps in categories that were based on medical evaluation. At the beginning of the 1990s, the concept of specific educational needs was introduced, classifying handicaps more on an educational basis. For example, pupils with specific educational needs are described as pupils that demand special resources or specific adaptations in their learning experiences.

The assessment is conducted by a psycho-pedagogical team, establishing an individual education plan, a process in which parents also participate. It focuses upon a flexible curriculum and the possibility of some individual adaptations, according to the educational environment of the pupil.

In *Spain*, pupils with special educational needs are defined as pupils who, for a period during or throughout their schooling, require specific special-purpose educational support and attention as they suffer from physical, mental or sensory disabilities, have severe behavioural disorders or are in underprivileged social or cultural situations. Six categories of disabilities are distinguished.

Psycho-pedagogical assessment is conducted by educational and psycho-pedagogical guidance teams (EOEP), or by school guidance departments. The assessment is based on the pupil's interaction with the contents and materials to be learnt, the teacher, the peers in the classroom and school and the family. If a pupil is not in school, the interaction of the pupil with his or her social setting is assessed.

The EOEP issues the 'opinion on schooling' that consists of: conclusions of the process of psycho pedagogical assessment, guidance on the proposed curriculum, the opinion of the parents and a reasoned proposal for educational provision - depending on the needs of the pupil and the characteristics and possibilities of the schools in the catchment area. The proposal may refer to special education schools or mainstream schools and is subject to a process of monitoring and periodical review.

After the EOEP issues the 'opinion on schooling', the Educational Inspectorate issues the report. The last step is that the Provincial Directorate, or the educational provision committee, hands down the decision.

In *Sweden* pupils with various difficulties are considered as pupils with special educational needs. The difficulties of pupils are categorised in 11 types of disabilities or handicaps. This attention for medical definitions of problems is

changing into a focus on the consequences of the impairment rather than on the impairment itself.

The advisers of The National Swedish Agency for Special Needs Education (SIH) can conduct qualified pedagogical investigations in those cases where local specialists, or parents, have agreed that investigation is necessary after consulting advisers. Very often these investigations are followed by professional development of the staff working with the pupil. Parents of pupils of compulsory school age have the right to choose a school their child will attend, within reasonable economic and organisational restrictions.

Summary

As expected, definitions and categories of special educational need and handicap vary across countries. Some countries define only one or two types of special educational need (for example Denmark). Others categorise pupils with special educational needs in 12 categories (the Netherlands). Most countries distinguish 6 - 10 types of special educational needs.

In almost every country the concept of special educational needs is high on the agenda. More and more people are convinced that the medical approach of the concept of 'handicap' should be replaced by a more educational approach: the consequences of the disability for education becoming the central focus. However, at the same time it is clear that this is a very complex approach and at the moment countries struggle with the practical implementation of this philosophy. Nevertheless, this topic, the description of disabilities in terms of educational consequences, is being debated in almost all the European countries.

Being recognised in more and more countries, is the related development of using information gained from the assessment of pupils with special educational needs in the implementation of appropriate and adapted forms of education. This is mostly done in terms of developing an individual educational programme, though in some countries other terms are used.

4.4 Provision for pupils with special educational needs

Austria has a system of (eight types of) special schools, special classes and some other services. A number of special schools (n = 205) are designated as Centres of Special Education which have the task of providing and co-ordinating measures in the field of special education, thus making it possible that pupils can also be taught in mainstream schools. The Centres provide and co-ordinate special education in compulsory schools. Their tasks include collecting data concerning

pupils with special educational needs, giving pedagogical and organisational advice, counselling parents and teachers, taking care of public relations, providing training opportunities, and setting up and taking care of mainstream classes with integration.

The *integration* of pupils with special educational needs can take different forms:

1. *mainstream class with full-time support*. In general, these classes consist of four to six disabled pupils (depending on the category and the degree of disability) and 17 to 20 non-disabled pupils. The class teacher is supported by a special teacher full time.
2. *mainstream classes with part-time support*. In such classes the number of disabled pupils is not enough to justify full-time support. The classroom teacher is supported part-time. The degree of this support depends on the number of disabled pupils, the category and the degree of disability, as well as the local situation.
3. *co-operation classes*. Co-operation classes are situated within a mainstream school, or at least in the same building. These classes have the structure of a special class, and the pupils are taught by a special teacher. The law offers these pupils the possibility to attend lessons in the mainstream class, when they are able to follow the mainstream curriculum. In practice most of these pupils follow parts of the curriculum in the mainstream class.

Special schools also provide mainstream schools with specialists in a special mobile service offering provision for pupils with special educational needs in or outside the classroom. This special mobile service is still available.

Special education in *Belgium (French and Flemish Community)* is primarily given via the separate special school system (with eight types of schools). There are no part-time or full-time special classes. Mainstream primary schools may have a remedial teacher (quite a number of these schools have a remedial teacher). Within the framework of integrated education, teachers and other professionals visit mainstream schools in order to help pupils.

Special education in *Denmark* can be arranged in different ways:

1. the pupil remains in a mainstream school class
   a) and receives special education in one or more subjects as a supplement to the general teaching
   b) and receives special education that substitutes the pupil's participation in the normal education in one or more subjects.

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2. the pupil's membership of a mainstream school class stops, the entire education is given in a special class either within a mainstream school or within a special school
3. the pupil is a member of either a mainstream school class or a special class, but receives education in both types of classes.

Special classes (and schools) exist for pupils with mental retardation, dyslexia, a visual handicap, hearing problems and for pupils with a physical handicap. Currently, (regional) resource centres are being developed in Denmark.

In *England and Wales* a continuum of provision exists implying an increasing degree of speciality and distance from the environments in which the majority of pupils are educated. The following settings can be distinguished:

1. the environment of the mainstream classroom
2. a combination of the mainstream classroom environment and a special setting within a mainstream school.
3. a combination of the mainstream classroom and a special setting outside a mainstream school
4. a special setting inside a mainstream school such as a unit or special class
5. a special setting outside a mainstream school such as a day special unit or school
6. a special residential setting.

According to NFER statistics, there are almost 1400 special schools in England. Finally, there are peripatetic teachers working in mainstream schools.

In *Finland*, special education consists of both special schools and special classes. The number of special schools is decreasing and the number of separate special education classes is increasing, as the teaching groups from closed special schools have been incorporated into mainstream comprehensive schools.

The state maintains eight special schools providing comprehensive school education. These schools are primarily intended for pupils with hearing or visual impairments, or with physical and other impairment. The state-owned special schools serve also as national centres for development and services. Finland distinguishes special teachers and special class teachers. *Special class teachers* work with pupils in special classes. *Special teachers* take care of pupils in mainstream classes who need part-time special training and suffer from specific learning difficulties, or more generally face problems with studying, concentrating, or with their social relations.

In *France*, specialised education programmes are under the responsibility of

various ministries. The Ministry of National Education designs preventive and back-up programmes for children who have difficulties in school. It also directly manages a certain number of classes, sections and institutions for children and adolescents with various types of disabilities. Furthermore, it has a legal obligation to pay for learning expenses, wherever the pupil attends school and/or receives medical care. The Ministry of National Education cannot be relieved of its responsibility for paying teachers who support pupils with specific needs, whatever sector they belong to. The Ministry in charge of Social Affairs holds jurisdiction over all the establishments of the medical-educational sector. It monitors socio-educational institutions, although they are financed by département (local regional) budgets. Some of these institutions are also licensed by the Ministry of Justice, which is directly in charge of very few establishments and services. Last of all, the Ministry of Public Health controls medical institutions.

National Education Ministry structures.

Three types of structures or establishments can be distinguished:

- institutions operating within the framework of 'mainstream' schools and the mission of which is to prevent learning difficulties;
- institutions in charge of collective and individual integration;
- institutions which provide 'adapted' general and vocational education.

The first category includes specialised networks, created in April 1990, to provide assistance to pupils who experience difficulties at nursery school and primary levels. These institutions originated in former so-called 'adaptation'-structures: adaptation classes and 'groupes d'aide psycho-pédagogiques' (GAPPs: psycho-educational groups) created in 1970. These assistance networks include school psychologists and specialised teachers who provide educational or rehabilitation aids to small groups of pupils. Adaptation classes can also be set up (with a maximum of 15 pupils per unit). However, they should not, in principle, educate any pupil for a period exceeding one year. Professional workers of these networks only step in once families have been informed. Psychological tests and rehabilitation aids cannot occur without prior written consent by the child's family. Over 37% of all specialised teaching positions are devoted to assistance networks. Their main task is indeed preventive.

Other structures available for school establishments are mostly collective integration or 'adapted' teaching structures. Elementary schools include 'Classes d'Intégration Scolaire' (CLIS). There are 4 types of CLIS: they are all aimed at

integrating pupil with a mental, visual, hearing, or motor deficiency and at enabling them to attend school. There are less than 5,000 classes of this type in France. It must be emphasised that for each pupil attending a CLIS a personal integration project must have been defined. Moreover, he/she must spend some integration time in mainstream classes, according to his/her capacities. Most often, pupils are guided towards the CLIS by the CCPE, but many pupil also receive a CDES letter of notification. This allows them to benefit from a rehabilitation or therapeutic follow-up programme provided by a medical-educational service, which is liable to operate in all various contexts of a pupil's life (school, home, day nursery, etc.) These services are often called SESSADs which stands for 'Service d'éducation spécialisée et de soins à domicile' (Specialised Education and Home Nursing Service).

Structures similar to the CLIS were set up in collèges in 1995 for pupils with a mental disability: the Unités Pédagogiques d'Intégration (UPIs). These units are still rather rare. They should help integrate some adolescents into mainstream schools after attending a CLIS or a specialised institution. Other collective structures are available in collèges and lycées for adolescents with a sensory or motor deficiency, but they are not called UPIs. Pupils are guided towards these structures by the Commissions d'Education Spéciale du Second Degré (CCSDs). The decision of the CCSD is completed, if required, by a letter of notification addressed to the CDES for a follow-up programme by a SESSAD.

A few (around 60) elementary-level specialised schools remain. Originally, they were often created to receive pupil whose health condition was fragile, but now they fulfil variety of tasks: for instance, they receive pupil with sensory deficiencies, or a serious illness.

The third category of structures is designed to provide a 'General and Vocational Adapted Teaching' to adolescents, usually in collège sections (or SEGPAs). There are 15,000 such structures. They welcome pupils from age 12 to 16 and, sometimes, up to the age of 17 or 18. These sections are operated by a specific staff: specialised school teachers, vocational lycée teachers, and an Assistant Principal who co-ordinates teaching methods and practices under the supervision of the Head of the collège. The first goal of the SEGPA is to provide its pupils with an education which will allow them access, in time, to a vocational training programme and a level V qualification - that is, a 'Certificat d'Aptitude Professional' (CAP: Certificate of Vocational Training).

In spite of all the prevention efforts the number of children in the SEGPA sections remained quite stable (about 120,000). The recent trend is to insist with

the need to introduce the SEGPA concept in more colleges, in other vocational schools as well as within the working environment. However, things are developing quite slowly because of the difficulties experienced by many teachers when dealing with teenagers known to be particularly difficult.

Last of all, 82 establishments offer boarding facilities to adolescents who also need an adapted general and vocational education: they are called 'Etablissements Régionaux d'Enseignement Adapté'. Most of these EREAs welcome pupils who experience the same difficulties as those who attend SEGPAs, but also have family and social problems requiring that they attend a boarding-school.

Some EREAs host pupils who have sensory and motor deficiencies and can provide a lycée level of teaching. They include a medical care unit. One must stress the fact that SEGPAs are only sections within an establishment, whereas EREAs are autonomous establishments with their own principal.

In order to be guided towards a SEGPA or an EREA, a pupil needs a CCSD letter of notification. As with any commission decision, this notification is mandatory for establishments, but not for families, who have a right of appeal.

Provision controlled by other Ministries.

Structures designed for pupils with specific needs and which are under the jurisdiction of other ministries than the National Education Ministry, are varied and complex. Most institutions and services are managed by associations or private, non-profit making, organisations. Several public establishments, representing 20% in terms of equipment, cover three sectors: the medical-educational, the socio-educational and the medical care sectors. In the medical-educational sector, there are two types of structures: mobile services, which focus on early prevention and part-time or full-time boarding schools providing medical care and education to children and adolescents with various types of disabilities.

Five categories of medical-educational establishments were set up to receive pupils with a mental disability, motor deficiencies, multiple handicaps, hearing deficiencies and visual deficiencies. Decrees published in 1988 and 1989 were aimed at helping in creating or transforming some of these establishments into home or school support services providing special education and home care. They are called 'SESSAD' (Services d'éducation spécialisée et de soins à domicile). The goal is to offer the pupil, as much as possible, an ordinary life environment, whilst providing necessary support structures. In the socio-educational and medical care sectors, various types of establishments are in operation. The socio-educational sector includes mainly Homes for Children which are managed by Social Assistance

and other service institutions financed by departmental budgets. A number of these establishments are authorised by the Ministry of Justice for children who are 'morally in danger' or who are delinquents. Very few establishments are managed directly by the Ministry of Justice. The health sector includes various private or public medical care establishments (paediatric services in hospitals or Homes for Children providing medical care).

In *Germany*, there are almost 4,000 special schools, divided into ten different types and this is the main option for educating children with special educational needs. Various forms of co-operation between mainstream and special schools have emerged and approaches to integrated teaching have been developed in educational studies. A focus on institutions has been replaced by a focus on the needs of the individual.

Next to the special school system, special education consists of the following forms:

* *Special educational support through preventive measures.* Pupils facing the threat of disability receive preventive assistance to help counteract the emergence of the disability.
* *Special educational support in joint education/lessons.* Education with special support can be organised in mainstream schools in co-operation or with assistance and practical support of a special teacher, other professionals, or in some cases a social-worker. Special support is provided inside the classroom, during class lessons, or outside the classroom, part-time or full-time depending upon the individual, organisational and institutional situation.
* *Special educational support in co-operative forms.* Many special schools and mainstream schools are in the process of developing close pedagogical co-operation. They offer opportunities for joint activities between disabled and non disabled pupils. Co-operation may enrich school lessons and school life for all participants and expands the opportunities for changing between school types and educational courses.
* *Special education in special units.* The aim of special education units, either as regional or supra-regional institutions, is to meet individual needs or a range of different needs and to guarantee special education in preventive, integrative, and co-operative forms. This form of education is organised as near to the home as possible and provided by specialists.
* *Special educational support within the framework of special pedagogical support centres.* In Germany, several Länder make the resource of special pedagogical knowledge and experience of special schools available by

developing these schools into support centres. The centres work as regional or supra-regional institutions with one or several key-points of support and ensure support in a preventive, integration, institutional or co-operative form. Between the Länder, there are differences in conceptions and aims of these centres. The centres are in charge of the diagnostic process, organise courses for pupils with special educational needs, give advice to and co-operate with teachers, offer basic information, provide training, and develop necessary aids and teaching materials.

* *Special education in the vocational training sector and during the transition to a work environment.* Young people with special educational needs are given the opportunity to receive vocational training, or are supported in integrating into a working environment that matches their individual capabilities and skills.
* *Special educational support in special classes.* These classes are organised in specific areas of special education and likewise for the educational support of pupils exhibiting temporary difficulties. Special educators take care of these learning groups; some of these classes are tied to primary or secondary schools. Examples of these classes are observation classes, classes for diagnosis and promotion, and classes for pupils with reading and writing disabilities.

In *Greece* there are almost 200 special schools. In 1995/96, the number of special pre-schools was 39 and the number of special primary schools 138. In secondary education there were 10 special schools for general secondary education and four special technical vocational schools. In 1995/96, there were also 650 special classes throughout the country.

Integration is provided in special classes or departments in mainstream schools that provide support for pupils with special educational needs. The support of a pupil with a special educational need and the extent and type of adaptations of the mainstream educational programme depend on the pupil's educational and other needs. This individualised programme covers either the entire programme or certain courses of full-time or part-time study. Integration can also be organised in special schools that share a building with a mainstream school, so the schools can organise cultural activities together.

In *Italy* pupils with special educational needs are guaranteed a place and education in mainstream classes in mainstream education. Pupils with special educational needs who have completed compulsory education are guaranteed admission in mainstream classes of post-compulsory secondary schools and when

they have completed this they are guaranteed access to higher education: universities and other institutions of higher education.

Pupils with special educational needs who are temporarily unable to go to school for health reasons are also guaranteed education. The provincial Director of Education arranges mainstream classes for minors in hospitals as detached units of state schools.

School integration of pupils with special educational needs into mainstream units and classes of any kind and level of education is achieved through a co-ordinated plan of school services, health and social assistance, cultural, recreation and sport centres as well as through activities managed by public or private bodies. Technical equipment and educational instruments are supplied to schools and universities.

In the different levels of compulsory education, one support teacher is provided for every four handicapped pupils. However, this ratio can be changed in primary schools when there are pupils with particularly serious handicaps on the basis of their functional diagnosis, or when schools are situated in the mountains or on little islands.

Although full integration of pupils with special educational needs is the current policy, there are also about 25 schools for the severely visually impaired (blind) and schools the deaf and speech impaired. Pupils with these severe sensory impairments can complete their compulsory education in mainstream schools as well as in the special schools.

The special education system in *the Netherlands* consists of almost 1,000 special schools divided into 12 different types of schools for special education. Next to this separate system for pupils with educational needs, there are also some examples of provisions that strive for, or support integration of pupils with special educational needs.

The first example is peripatetic supervision. Peripatetic supervision, or 'ambulant teaching', supports pupils that return from special education to a mainstream school and pupils who are eligible for special education, but have not been referred to the separate special school system. A special education teacher can offer the mainstream education teacher and the pupil the support necessary for an adequate education in a mainstream school. These facilities are used to an increasing extent.

A second example of integration, is the growing number of pupils with Down's syndrome in mainstream education. This growth is fully due to activities of parental organisations. Parents want their children with Down's syndrome to attend mainstream schools. Although Dutch mainstream schools do not have to accept

these pupils, an increasing number of mainstream schools accept the placement as a new challenge. The Dutch government has followed this development by providing extra support in mainstream education.

A third example of innovations towards integration are local projects, such as: projects aimed at more intensive co-operation between mainstream and special education, projects aimed at thematic subjects such as referral and placement and projects dealing with pupils returning from special to mainstream education.

In *Norway*, for the majority of pupils with special educational needs, special education is provided at the mainstream school to which the pupil belongs, most often within his or her own class. The pupils may also be taught in small groups together with other pupils with special educational needs, or individually. For many pupils a combination of these organisational models is practised. Norway has some special schools: specific schools and environmental schools, municipality schools for social and emotional problems, municipality schools for severe learning difficulties, schools in child care institutions, schools in institutions for drug addicts and alcoholics, national schools for deaf and deaf-blind pupils, and national schools for mentally retarded pupils.

There are about 20 resource centres for pupils with certain disabilities including visual and hearing impairment, dyslexia, behavioural and emotional disorders, severe learning difficulties, and mental disabilities. Four regional resource centres have been established for persons born both deaf and blind. An autism programme and a national resource centre for MBD/ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome and Narcolepsy has also been established. For Northern Norway, a special development programme has been initiated.

The support systems for mainstream schools consist of the educational psychological service (270) and the national resource centres.

Portugal provides education for pupils with special educational needs mainly in mainstream schools and in some cases in special schools. Several forms of provision may be organised by mainstream schools, in accordance with a pupil's individual education plan. Within the mainstream school several possibilities are available, such as full integration in the mainstream class, a combination of a mainstream school with a special setting within the same school or, in a few cases, a special unit.

There are also special schools under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education: 85 Co-operative non-profit making institutions (CERCI) and 31 profit making institutions (Colégios). The number of special schools that fall under the responsibility of the Solidarity and Social Assistance Ministry is 105.

In *Spain* special education schools provide education for pupils who require significant and extreme adaptations of the official curriculum for which they are eligible on the basis of their age. There are slightly more than 200 special schools in Spain. Special education schools provide for pupils whose special educational needs are so complex that they cannot be catered for in a mainstream school and contribute to maximising the quality of life of these pupils. There are boarding schools to accommodate pupils who live a long way from the special education school. Concerted special schools are private centres that are financed with public funds. Under some circumstances, in rural areas classrooms are set up in mainstream schools: special education school substitute classrooms.

Pupils that have less severe difficulties are educated in mainstream infant/primary and secondary education schools. All publicly funded schools are obliged to provide education for pupils with special educational needs, two pupils per class. The Ministry of Education and Culture provides these schools with human resources who are responsible for providing support to pupils with special educational needs. Some of these professionals are itinerant/peripatetic: they are based at one school and serve other schools from there.

A pupil in *Sweden* who has difficulties following class instruction can receive various forms of support. A remedial teacher can support the pupil in the classroom, or can teach the pupil in a special group outside the classroom. Within mainstream schools special teaching groups are also organised for pupils with functional impairments and for pupils with social and emotional problems. Municipalities run a special programme for pupils with severe learning disabilities. Education for these pupils takes place in special classes. Pupils who are ill for a longer period can be taught in a hospital or at home. There are eight special schools for deaf and hearing-impaired pupils and for visually impaired and speech or language impaired children. Furthermore, there are special programmes for pupils with learning disabilities concentrated in some mainstream schools: these cater for about 8000 pupils. Pupils with learning disabilities can also be integrated individually or placed in special groups within mainstream education.

The National Swedish Agency for Special Needs Education (SIH) is responsible for providing special pedagogical support to pupils, parents, schools, and local authorities so that pupils with functional impairments will receive the best possible education. This support focuses on pupils with vision impairments, physical impairments, immigrant pupils with disabilities and pupils with multiple disabilities. The principal focus of the special advisers' operations is that they initiate plans and actions that will minimise handicaps. The advisers provide

information and support and develop and evaluate individual action programmes. The advisers can also conduct qualified pedagogical investigations in those cases where local specialists or parents have agreed that investigation is necessary after consulting the advisers. Very often these investigations are followed by professional development of the staff that work with the pupil. In addition, the advisers offer supplementary materials such as professional guidance and adapted educational materials.

Summary

In relation to the provision of special needs education in Europe, a few trends can be recognised. Firstly, there is a clear development towards the transformation of special schools into resource centres. These centres have a wide variety of tasks, one of which is the support of mainstream schools in dealing with children with special educational needs. The development towards these support centres is for example the case in Denmark, Austria, Germany and Norway. However, more countries are debating this issue and have implemented, or will implement, such a provision in the near future. These centres may have a regional task for a wider range of pupils. They may also have national responsibility for certain specific target groups.

A second finding evident from the preceding country descriptions, is that in most countries a wide range of facilities is available. Every country has already implemented, or is implementing, policies which make integrative education possible. Of course, some countries have had a longer experience of integration than others and some countries have only just started to improve the conditions for integration in mainstream education. Generally, in most countries there is a continuum of services and facilities available, ranging from separate special education settings to full time integration within the mainstream school.

Some countries place clear emphasis upon the education of children with special educational needs within mainstream classrooms; others still have larger separate special education systems. To group these countries' positions into a few categories is a complex task. However, it is clear - and this will be further demonstrated in the next section - that countries like Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Finland and France have relatively large numbers of children in separate special classes or schools. As a result, the special setting is the most characteristic provision in those countries, although some of these countries report quite an impressive and wide range of other facilities. On the other hand, countries like Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Norway and Sweden offer, in the first

place, services within mainstream classrooms and have, as a result, relatively few facilities outside the mainstream school. Other countries like Denmark and England and Wales provide a wide range of facilities both within and outside the mainstream classroom. It is important to repeat here that *these, and other notions concerning provision for special educational needs education in this report, do not imply any statement about the quality of the educational provision.* What is reflected here are the differences and similarities between countries concerning the *organisation of the special services* and the particular trends and developments emerging as a result.

4.5 Number of pupils with special educational needs

Comparing countries - especially using quantitative indicators - is very complex task: particularly in the field of special needs education and integration. This fact is compounded when some countries are able to provide relatively precise data and others only global estimations. This can be seen as the result of the fact that some countries do not pay much attention to the gathering of statistics in the field of integration or special education, whilst others do. As previously mentioned, comparisons of quantitative data is beyond the goal of this study. The emphasis lies upon qualitative aspects of school integration and less upon quantitative items. For more quantitative work we refer to the study of OECD/UNESCO/EUROSTAT. However, it is appropriate here to present some quantitative information, but only in a global format. In the previous country sections of Chapter Three the percentages of pupils registered as having special educational needs and the percentages of pupils in segregated settings have been given for all or almost all of the participating countries. In the next tables, these findings are combined and the countries grouped according to these two 'indicators': registration and segregation.

Percentage of registered SEN pupils across countries

0%-2%	2%-4%	4%-6%	6%-8%	>8%
Greece	Austria	Netherlands	Norway	Denmark
Italy	Belgium (Fl.)	Germany		England
Spain	Belgium (Fr.)			Finland
Sweden	France			
	Portugal			

As expected the percentages vary greatly across countries. Some countries register less than 1% of all pupils as having special educational needs (Greece for example); others register more than 10% (England, Finland and Denmark). These differences in the percentage of registered pupils reflect differences in assessment procedures, funding arrangements and provision. It is argued here that they do *not reflect differences in the incidence of special educational needs* across countries.

In the next table, information is provided regarding the percentage of pupils in segregated settings (special schools and classes). Although it is felt that the data presented below is fairly reliable in representing the current state of the art, it should be emphasised that the numbers reflect the percentages in segregated settings for *different age groups* (the compulsory school age range varies across countries).

Percentage of pupils with SEN in segregated settings

<1%	1%-2%	2%-3%	3%-4%	4%-5%
Greece	England	Austria	Belgium (Fl.)	Netherlands
Italy	Denmark	Finland	Belgium (Fr.)	Germany
Norway		France		
Spain				
Portugal				
Sweden				

Here, the differences are also large; some countries place less than 1% of all children in separate schools and classes, others more than 4%. The countries in the Northwest of Europe particularly appear to place pupils more frequently in special settings as opposed to Southern European and Scandinavian countries.

4.6 Curriculum and teaching in relation to special educational needs

4.6.1 Introduction

In this section, the curriculum and teacher training in the field of special educational needs will be dealt with. Information concerning teacher attitudes will also be provided.

Not all of the participating countries have submitted the same type information on these subjects. It is thus possible that certain countries are not listed here in the presentation of the different topics. In relation to specific information concerning teacher training, readers are referred to the forthcoming report of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. This report is focussed upon teacher support and will extensively deal with teacher training in the European countries. This report will be published in 1998.

4.6.2 Curriculum

In *Austria* the accessibility of the mainstream curriculum of the different compulsory schools depends upon the category and the degree of the disability. The choice of a curriculum for a pupil with special educational needs must always correspond with the needs and the ability of the pupil. That means that the pupil may be instructed in particular subjects according to different curricula.

According to the new law, physically handicapped, visually handicapped and hearing impaired pupils may be educated and instructed according to an adapted curriculum with reference to their disability, or even be relieved from a subject if they cannot follow the instruction because of their specific disability.

In *Belgium* the curriculum in general applies to all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs that are integrated in mainstream schools are supposed to follow the mainstream curriculum. Legislation has created the possibility to adjust the curriculum, but practice shows that the same methods and materials are used. When the report of a guidance centre concludes that a child should attend a special school, the school sets the objectives to be attained and works out an individual educational plan corresponding to the pupils needs with the help of the guidance centre.

In *Denmark*, the Ministry of Education publishes guidelines for the subjects of the curriculum. These guidelines have the form of a recommendation and are not mandatory for the local school administrators. Schools are allowed to draw up their own curriculum as long as this curriculum is in line with the aims and proficiency areas that are laid down by the Ministry. However, nearly all schools choose to use the national guidelines as their curricula. For special classes and

special schools, special timetables are developed. It is also allowed to construct special curricula.

In *England and Wales*, the national curriculum, introduced in 1988 and revised in 1995, is intended to be followed by all pupils, regardless of any special educational needs. Opportunities exist for disapplication both from the curriculum and from assessment procedures, but this is not considered necessary for the majority of cases. The framework for national inspection assesses schools' ability to provide the national curriculum appropriately for all pupils. Practice in individual schools and classrooms varies, influenced by experience and expertise within that school, attitudes towards and incidence of pupils with special educational needs and the availability and quality of local authority advice, guidance and support. There is a considerable corpus of material to assist teachers with differentiation. This is variously prepared by the mainstream teachers, by specialists within the schools or by specialist peripatetic teachers. The adaptations can include all forms of differentiation such as input, output, task, mode of delivery and context. Class teachers are normally expected to differentiate on three levels: average, less able, and extension material. Materials for the small minority of pupils with the most significant needs, would sometimes be prepared by the mainstream teacher, but more usually by specialist teachers and/or support assistants. All pupils at stage two and above of the Code of Practice should have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which would state any adaptation necessary for them, together with particular short-term targets.

In *Finland*, the Comprehensive School Act stipulates that the Council of State decides on the timetable for comprehensive schools and approves a general policy for the instruction of foreign languages, including qualitative and quantitative objectives. The National Board of Education issues curricular guidelines to assist schools in devising their own curriculum. These guidelines provide the foundation that can be interpreted, adapted and added to at the local level in order to come up with a curriculum that describes, develops and directs the practical work of teaching. The municipalities are obliged to have a curriculum for the comprehensive schools under their jurisdiction. The municipality lays down the framework within which schools carry out their work of development. It is important that the municipalities develop their educational services as a whole so that the strengths of each school can be exploited by other schools and they are able to diversify their study programmes.

In special education, the general objectives and essential content are the same as in mainstream comprehensive education. The instruction - and when necessary

the syllabi - must be adjusted to meet the learning abilities of the pupils. If needed, the syllabi can be set individually for each pupil and a personal curriculum can be set. The personal curriculum contains an account of the pupil's learning potential, behavioural features, working methods and skills, short and long-term objectives and the means and methods to meet these objectives, as well as evaluations and observations of the progress of the pupil.

In *Germany*, due to the existing sovereignty of the 'Länder', each 'Land' has its own legislation and its own curriculum. Apart from special schools for pupils with learning difficulties and schools for mentally handicapped children, all special schools work on the basis of curricula which in terms of educational goals, lesson content, and performance requirements match those of the mainstream schools. However, the methods that are used by special schools must take into account the special learning requirements and impairments relating to individual types of disability. Schools for pupils with learning difficulties and schools for mentally handicapped pupils work according to their own special curriculum.

Assessment of individual special educational needs includes a decision as to whether the pupil can be taught according to the general curriculum or needs to be taught according to the special curriculum. Some of the Länder promote integration within the framework of the general curriculum; other Länder also promote integration within the framework of a special curriculum. Some of the Länder have passed a recommendation that gives pupils with special educational needs that follow the general curriculum and who have intellectual retardation, a right to a reduction of exercises, more time to work, technical aids and so on.

In *Greece*, the Pedagogical Institute has prepared a Special Education Curriculum Framework that was published in 1996. The purpose of this framework is to provide support to pupils with special educational needs so that they can develop to the extent of their capacities and may be integrated into the mainstream school and social environment. A document based on this curriculum helps teachers in drawing up individualised teaching programmes for pupils with special educational needs in a mainstream or a special school. The Pedagogical Institute has also prepared support material for the programmes of school learning readiness and a curriculum framework for special learning difficulties.

In *Italy*, the curriculum can be adapted to the specific needs of the pupil. This is done through a functional-dynamic profile. This profile describes the potential and the weaknesses of a pupil from different angles. It points at the pupil's learning difficulties related to the particular kind of handicap and to individual skills that should be encouraged and developed. A functional-dynamic profile is required to

determine the way the curriculum is to be adapted to the particular needs of the pupil.

In *the Netherlands*, education in special schools is based on a schoolwork plan, which contains an overview of the organisation and the content of education. The curriculum has to contain the same subjects as in mainstream schools. However, after approval of the Minister of Education and Science, it is possible to adjust the curriculum to pupils with various handicaps.

If necessary, an individual educational programme is developed, which describes how the schoolwork plan is adjusted for the individual pupil or group of pupils. This plan describes which educational aims are set for the specific pupil(s), how the education will be organised and how and when the results will be evaluated. On the basis of this evaluation the plan can be adjusted or revised. In practice, many schools only develop individual educational programmes for pupils with serious or complicated problems.

In *Norway* the curriculum is based on the principles of integration, participation and decentralisation. The curriculum caters for pupils with special educational needs by making local and individual adaptations possible. When it comes to subject syllabi, the school has to work out individual plans for pupils with special educational needs. In this plan, the school must take into account the goals and the content of the mainstream subject syllabi for the class and make the adaptations needed for each pupil. This plan must also take into consideration the advice of the pedagogical psychological service. In the near future, the ministry will publish a guideline on how to make individual plans for pupils with special educational needs. From 1997, there are special syllabi for deaf children based on the principle that sign language is their first language.

In *Portugal*, there are several options to adapt the flexible mainstream curriculum to pupils with special educational needs. Depending on the difficulties of the pupil, the adaptations can differ from simple changes of aims and contents to an alternative, individual curriculum that leads to a diploma of specific competencies.

In *Spain*, the mainstream curriculum can be adapted to the type of the pupil's needs. The adaptations can be significant and modify compulsory contents of different areas of the curriculum and affect general objectives and respective criteria of assessment. All significant adaptations of the curriculum are written down in a document and this document is attached to the assessment process documents. The personalised curriculum adaptations serve as a basis for decisions on supplementary support.

Sweden has a national curriculum that is defined by the Parliament and the government. One of the aims is to ensure integration, with the exception of deaf pupils. The current curriculum does not use the word mainstreaming or integration, but takes for granted that all pupils will be educated in mainstream classes. If this is not possible, the school has to clearly indicate why another solution is chosen for some pupils. For each pupil with special educational needs, an action plan has to be worked out by the teacher in consultation with the pupil, the parents and the remedial teacher. This plan will be evaluated continuously.

4.6.3 Teacher training

In *Austria*, teachers for special education graduate from the 3 year initial special teacher training at the teacher training college, emphasising the qualification for the field of learning disabilities and severely and multiple handicapped children. This teacher training is a special separate track and compulsory for all special teachers. The certificate authorises them to work in a special school, or as a support teacher in mainstream classes. In addition, in-service teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges offer courses for further special qualifications with reference to the different categories of disabilities in special schools, authorising teachers to work at the respective special schools, or in a mobile special service.

Teacher training colleges do not offer special initial training for support teachers in mainstream classes, but emphasise this particular educational field within the frame of their curriculum. The in-service teacher training colleges offers most of the special training programmes in integration. In Austria, in-service training is optional and offered to teachers in accordance to their needs. Since in-service teacher training colleges are flexible in adapting their programme to current developments, the integration policy has greatly influenced their courses.

In *England and Wales*, there is no nationally applied curriculum for initial teacher training courses, students have to be trained for teaching competencies. Relevant to special educational needs are:

* 'the ability to identify special educational needs or learning difficulties'
* 'the ability to identify and provide for special educational needs and specific learning difficulties'

Since the introduction of the Code of Practice in 1994, all teachers are required to monitor and record the progress of pupils at various stages of the Code. These requirements imply that adequate preparation must be given for this during initial training. A great deal of initial teacher training is undertaken by mainstream

schools in collaboration with Institutes for Higher Education. Much depends on the degree of expertise and experience of special educational needs in the school that is providing the training. Within initial teacher training little time is available for specific special educational needs training. New teachers lack confidence in dealing with special educational needs and do not feel that they have been adequately prepared. A lot then depends on the induction and professional development programmes within the schools that new teachers gain their first teaching post.

In-service training concerning special educational needs can consist of full-time courses, part-time, accredited courses and a wide range of short special educational needs courses, run for a day, half a day or in after school hours. Professional and voluntary associations are quite strong within the world of special educational needs. There is often no guarantee of quality and no assurance of overall coherent training as teachers can choose the kind of training they want. Next to this training, much informal teacher training and professional development is led by the peripatetic support services.

In *Finland*, after finishing initial teacher training, the teacher can enter a special teacher study programme. These studies are divided into special class teacher education and special teacher education. ***Special class teachers*** work with pupils in special classes. ***Special teachers*** support pupils in mainstream classes who need part-time special training.

In *France*, little attention is currently devoted in the initial training of teachers to the education of children with specific needs. However, this situation may soon change. For the time being, their training is mainly a complementary specialised training. Most specialised teachers hold a CAAPSAIS diploma ('Certificat d'aptitude aux actions pédagogiques spécialisées d'adaptation et d'intégration scolaires'). The CAAPSAIS was created in 1987. It offers several options and students can choose from among seven specialised programmes:

A - hearing deficiencies;
B - visual deficiencies;
C - motor deficiencies and children with an illness;
D - serious psychological problems;
E - learning difficulties in primary school;
F - learning difficulties in the secondary school (collège);
G - rehabilitation assistance;

To follow a CAAPSAIS training, a primary teaching diploma is required. The training takes place in specialised departments of the Higher Education Institutes for

Training Teachers ('Instituts Universitaires de Formation de Maîtres' - IUFMs) or at the National Center in Suresnes. Most IUFMs focus on options D, E, F and G. The CAAPSAIS curriculum devotes a large part of its programme to integration: it states explicitly that one of the tasks of a teacher is to promote integration. Moreover, one of the skills expected of teachers with a CAAPSAIS diploma is defined as follows: they must be able to help develop integration activities.

In the French report it is further highlighted that mainstream teachers need to be well prepared for educating pupils with special educational needs and here initial teacher training plays a crucial role. Co-operation and dialogue between mainstream teachers, special teachers and other professionals does not emerge automatically and they need motivation to act in the desired direction. Preparation should be given for this in initial teacher training. It should also be made possible to learn from experiences of others and from their good practices. It is very important that people feel and know that integration is possible and that co-operation amongst all the relevant actors is a prerequisite.

In *Germany* special education teachers receive their training in nine semester basic courses, or an additional follow-up course subsequent to other teacher training courses. In all Länder, training is divided into higher education and practical training. The first period of training includes a specialist component with the study of at least two subjects or subject areas, an educational science component and a teaching practice component. For special education, the subjects in the specialist component are related to forms of disabilities.

The qualification to become a special teacher can be attained by passing the First and Second State Examinations, or by following an additional course after teacher training for a different type of teaching career, which also includes a state examination. The Länder provide the two forms of training side by side, or as alternatives. For all teaching careers, higher education is followed by the preparatory period, as the second stage of teacher training.

In *Greece*, the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs took measures to support teachers. In 1998 seminars will be organised for all educational officials, for about 12,000 teachers in primary and secondary mainstream and special schools and special professionals, for 1,000 parents of children with special educational needs and for all members of medical diagnostic centres. These seminars will provide educational knowledge and demonstrate teaching methods in an effort to raise consciousness regarding pupils with special educational needs. Next to these seminars, the same interested parties can attend specialised courses in educating pupils who are visually impaired, deaf, mentally retarded, autistic,

physically handicapped, socially maladjusted, or who have learning difficulties.

During the past two years, several pilot projects have been implemented in the field of integration. Since the results of these projects were satisfactory, the Ministry has included under the Community Support Framework a three-year programme to train and inform all special education teachers and all teachers in mainstream education in integration issues. This training programme has been assigned to the University of Athens and will be implemented throughout the country.

In *Italy*, support teachers assigned to mainstream classes with handicapped pupils must have attained a specialist qualification at the end of a theoretical and practical two year course of study: these are organised in institutions recognised by the Ministry. Only qualified teachers can attend these courses. They become mainstream teachers, participating in the education plan, drawing up and assessment of activities.

The Ministry of Public Education makes provisions for in-service teacher training courses relating to the integration of pupils with special educational needs. Some courses also include the staff of Local Health Authorities and local authorities involved in education and rehabilitation plans. Further study and work groups, composed of teachers, service workers, parents and pupils are set up in all primary school clusters and lower and upper secondary schools to contribute to the education and integration activities of the education plan.

The administrative and teaching staff of schools for the visually and hearing and speech impaired and of schools with particular aims, must have attained a specialist qualification at the end of a two-year theoretical and practical course held in institutes recognised by the Ministry of Public Education.

In *the Netherlands*, initial teacher training takes four years. The programme for ITT is rather full and, therefore, adding special educational needs programmes is difficult. Teachers are not obliged to attend in-service training courses. Yet, a considerable number of teachers follow short courses on various subject matters and a growing number of mainstream school teachers have a special education certificate. To obtain training in special education, one should already be a qualified teacher. Training is provided on a two-year, part-time basis and leads to certification for special education.

In *Norway*, all teachers receive introductory courses in special education and support services in their initial training. Half a year of special education is required in the initial teacher training. There are also mainstream in-service training programmes on special education issues.

Special education is offered as an upgrading course. Several colleges offer two

years of training in special education on a full-time or part-time basis. The institute for special education at the University of Oslo offers training at masters and doctorate levels. 16% of the teachers in compulsory schools have studied special education for one year or more in addition to their initial training. The focus of the training for special education teachers is upon different special educational topics as well as preventive work and counselling.

In *Portugal*, there is a national programme for in-service teacher training with the involvement of several bodies: universities, teacher training centres and the Ministry of Education itself. In 1996, the Ministry of Education offered training to teachers in very specific areas, such as early intervention, multi-handicap, cognitive problems, communication problems, sign language, low vision, orientation and mobility, Braille code, transition to active life. At this moment (1997-1998), a particular national programme of in-service training is implemented for mainstream and support teachers and school directors.

In *Sweden*, legislation from 1988 states that all compulsory schoolteachers must complete studies of special pedagogy, equivalent to half a term. In addition there is a three-term specialist training programme: 'special education supplementary training'.

4.6.4 Teacher attitudes

In *Austria*, the attitudes of teachers in primary education towards integrated pupils with special educational needs are generally positive. Evaluation shows that most teachers felt competent enough for the new area of responsibility after a short time. In secondary education, the experience with integration is restricted to schools and teachers that have participated in pilot projects. These teachers integrated pupils with special educational needs voluntarily, which implies a positive attitude towards integration. However, the majority of teachers of secondary schools remain sceptical about integration.

In the report of *England* and *Wales*, it is stated that information about teachers' attitudes usually is found within general studies of integration. Teachers' attitudes appear to be shaped by their experiences. Teachers in mainstream schools are usually willing to have pupils with special educational needs within their classes provided that they feel that they have adequate support. Research indicates that much is determined by local authority and school culture. Attitudes towards pupils who have a poor image in the community are harder than those towards pupils with more acceptable special educational needs. Schools are sensitive to their local reputation as their budget depends on pupils' numbers.

In *Finland*, recent surveys have assessed the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to special pedagogy of class teachers and particularly of subject teachers as inadequate. The teachers of mainstream education find integration difficult particularly with regard to disabled, socially maladjusted and emotionally disturbed pupils. Teachers think the problem lies in large teaching groups and in insufficient training of teachers as far as special pedagogy is concerned.

In *France*, it is reported that in mainstream schools there is some fear to work with other, handicapped pupils and teachers also fear the lack of necessary support in order to cope with a variety of pupils in their classes and schools. They already have large classes and the integration of a few pupils with special educational needs might over-burden their work and require more differentiation. They also feel that they are not competent in working with those pupils since they lack training. There are, nevertheless, clear examples of good practice, where people are very motivated and where there is a strong conviction that integration implies a clear benefit for the school as a whole: integration is an advantage for all pupils.

Germany reports that with the legislative changes, the increasing teacher training facilities, in service training and the increase of experience with integration, more and more teachers have developed positive attitudes and are willing to integrate more pupils with special educational needs. The report points at the well-known finding that positive attitudes largely depend upon positive experience and sufficient resources. However, some teachers in Germany feel that they lack sufficient training and feel that special education is best given in special schools where more adequate support is available.

Teachers in mainstream education in *the Netherlands* generally welcome the idea that pupils with special educational needs should go to mainstream schools and grow up with other pupils. However, when a special educational needs pupil is placed in a mainstream classroom, teachers start to worry and make objections. Teachers are afraid that their knowledge and skills are insufficient and that the placement of a pupil with special educational needs will have a negative influence on the other pupils in the classroom. They look for possibilities to share their responsibility with the support teacher, or to get rid of the responsibility by using a special class. However, teachers who are experienced in teaching pupils with special educational needs in mainstream settings seem to develop a positive, more self-confident attitude.

In *Norway*, results of a research project of the institute for special education of the University of Oslo show that teachers often feel unable to meet the needs of pupils with learning disabilities and pupils with behavioural problems.

It is reported that in *Portugal*, teachers in mainstream education are open-minded to integration, although, sometimes, the process can entail some difficulties that should be overcome with better conditions.

In the report of *Spain*, it is reported that the attitude of teachers towards integration is also generally favourable, although integration has been a long process with difficulties that had to be overcome.

4.6.5 Summary

A few common findings and trends are evident concerning the curriculum, the training of the teachers and the attitudes of teachers.

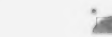
Most countries make use of an individual educational programme for pupils with special educational needs. The way in which the mainstream curriculum is adapted, the necessary additional resources, the goals and the evaluation of the educational approach taken are usually incorporated in such a document. These adaptations can take different forms and in some cases, for specific categories of pupils, these adaptations may even have the form of deleting certain subjects of the general curriculum.

In relation to the training of teachers, there are significant differences between countries. Some countries (for example, Norway and Sweden) insert a structural part of training in special educational needs into the initial teacher-training programme for all teachers. Others, and this may reflect the different organisational approaches to educating pupils with special educational needs, have almost a full separate track for special education teachers.

There are different approaches employed to achieve higher standards of teacher knowledge and skills: structural education within ITT, separate education for special teachers (in addition to ITT), in service training courses, and combinations of these. Some countries (Portugal and Greece for example) have recently implemented or are now implementing intensive programmes that are 'injected' in the professionals in education on a wide scale.

As regards attitudes of teachers, it is frequently mentioned that positive attitudes depend strongly upon experience (with pupils with special educational needs), teacher training, the availability of support and on other practical conditions such as class size and workload of teachers. Particularly in secondary education, teachers are less willing to educate pupils with special educational needs in their classrooms.

Finally, it is reported that teachers are reluctant to integrate pupils with severe emotional and behavioural problems.



4.7 Roles of special schools

The change and development of special schools and institutes into resource centres is a very common trend in Europe. Almost all the countries report that they are planning to develop, already are developing or already have developed, a network of resource centres in their countries. Different names are given to these centres and different tasks are assigned to them. Some countries speak in terms of knowledge centres, others in terms of expertise-centres or support centres.

Generally the following tasks are distinguished for these centres:

- provision of training and courses for teachers and other professionals
- development and dissemination of materials and information regarding teaching methods
- support for mainstream schools and parents
- short-time or part-time help for individual pupils
- support with respect to the entrance in the labour market.

Some of these centres have a national task, mostly with respect to certain specific target groups (especially for low-incidence special educational needs); others have a wider and more regional task.

A few countries already have some experience with resource centres (Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland for example); others are implementing the system (Germany, Austria) and still others are planning to implement them (the Netherlands). In some countries special schools are obliged to co-operate with mainstream schools in their catchment area (Spain), or special schools supply ambulant/peripatetic or other services to mainstream schools (for example Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece, England and Wales).

The issue of the role of special schools in terms of integration is, of course, strongly related to the special educational system prevalent in a country. In countries with almost no special schools, such as Norway and Italy for example, their role is structurally modest (in Norway 20 of the former state special schools are defined in terms of - regional or national - resource centres). In countries with a relatively large special education system, special schools are more actively involved in the process of promoting integration. In those countries co-operation between special and mainstream education is the key word. However in those countries voices are heard that special schools are threatened by the process of integration (Belgium, the Netherlands, France for example). This is more or less the direct consequence of having a relatively large special school system: on the one hand the co-operation of special schools in the process towards integration is

necessary, on the other hand the integration process itself is a direct danger for their continued existence. At the same time, integration in those countries is difficult to achieve as mainstream schools are more or less used to referring their problems to other parts of the school system i.e. the special schools. In addition, special teachers and other professionals working in the special school system see themselves as the experts in the case of pupils with special educational needs; usually they consider that they fulfil a need and challenge the notion of integration. It is extremely difficult to change such a status quo. As the report of England and Wales states: 'This attitude is grounded in the notion that segregated provision is needed as long as expertise and resources are lacking in mainstream schools, in consideration of the broad needs of the pupils, and in the attention to parental wishes and the wishes of the young people with disabilities.'

4.8 Parents and attitudes in society

Most countries report that parents generally have positive attitudes towards integration; the same holds for attitudes in the society at large. It is clear that attitudes of parents are largely determined by personal experiences. Positive experiences with integration are quite seldom in countries where the facilities are concentrated in the special school system and not available within mainstream schools. However, if these services can also be offered in mainstream schools, parents will soon develop positive attitudes. The mass media can play an important role here.

In countries with a more segregated school system, parental pressure towards integration is increasing (Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany). In countries where integration is common practice, positive attitudes of parents are also reported (for example Greece, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Sweden). At the same time, countries report that in the case of more severe special educational needs, parents - and pupils - sometimes prefer special education in a separated setting. This is, for example, the case in Norway (parents of deaf children emphasise the need to communicate with other peers through sign language) and Finland (for pupils with severe special educational needs). In Spain and Portugal there are also voices that advocate placement in special classes and schools. Particularly for pupils with more severe needs (including severe emotional and behavioural problems) some parents and - as was indicated in the preceding section - also some teachers, believe that special schools have more resources, competence and skills than mainstream schools. This holds especially true for secondary education.

Parental choice is an important issue in Austria, the Netherlands and England and Wales. Parents in those countries generally appreciate the legal possibility to choose between special and mainstream school placement.

Some countries point at the influence of decentralisation upon attitudes of parents (France for example). It is believed that on a local and regional level parental influence is more easily developed and short communicative lines to responsible authorities can facilitate change. In Sweden it was decided that local authorities should transfer certain responsibilities and parts of the decision making processes to local boards with a majority of parents.

4.9 Barriers to integration

In the preceding sections and in the country descriptions in Chapter Three, a number of factors are mentioned. These factors can be interpreted as barriers to integration. The list of factors that may enhance or threaten integration is without end. Quite a number of factors at the level of policies, education, pupils, teachers, training, and so forth, are mentioned. Most of them have been dealt with in this chapter. These factors will not be repeated verbatim here, but, without referring to specific countries, the most frequently mentioned are indicated below.

A few countries point at the importance of an appropriate funding system. They state that their funding system does not enhance integrative practices. In the next chapter (5), this issue will be focused upon in more detail.

Inhibition of integrative practices not only arises from the funding system, the existence of a large separate special educational setting itself is a hindrance to integration. The division of mainstream and special schools has several negative consequences: a key chain of events beginning with the perception that the help required by pupils experiencing difficulties is inextricably linked to a special education setting. This largely results in pupils being placed in separate schools with all the attendant disadvantages. Special education is then an attractive alternative as it provides all the necessary provisions for extra help. As a result, parents and teachers follow a pattern of agreeing with suggestions that special schools have the requisite expertise and provision for expert, individual and intensive remedial care, whilst mainstream schools do not provide anything comparable. Such a viewpoint cannot be seen to promote the placement of pupils with special learning needs in mainstream education. As a consequence, in this situation there is a strong tendency for growing numbers of referrals to and placement in special schools. The combination of the existence of two separate

school systems and the psycho-medical approach to special educational needs results in an expansion and perpetuation of the special school system.

As has been indicated previously, the integration debate in countries with relatively large separate special school systems may also result in the fact that special schools as organisations and the special teachers and staff within them, may feel threatened. In fact, they may feel that their position is in danger. This is even stronger in situations where the general economic context is tense and where jobs may be viewed as being in danger. In such situations, it is very complex to debate integration on the basis of educational or normative arguments alone.

Some countries express the essential influence of decentralisation on integration processes. This also is a very interesting topic. It will be carefully addressed in the next chapter.

Other important factors that have been addressed in the preceding chapters and sections focus upon the availability of sufficient conditions and support within mainstream schools. If the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials are not available within mainstream settings, integration of pupils with special educational needs will be difficult to achieve. As is emphasised earlier, adequate teacher training (in initial teacher-training or through in-service programmes) is an essential prerequisite for integration.

Some countries point at class sizes in mainstream schools as a negative factor for integration. Indeed it is extremely difficult for teachers to integrate pupils with special educational needs in situations where they have a relatively high workload.

Factors at the level of pupils have also been mentioned. Countries express that in some cases (e.g. pupils who are deaf or show severe emotional and/or behavioural problems), integration is a real challenge. This is especially the case in secondary schools.

As previously stated, the list of factors that may inhibit or accelerate integration is almost endless. In the following chapter, a selection of the most significant issues and common trends in European countries at the moment will be considered.

5 Thematic issues and recent trends

5.1 Introduction

Section 5.2 will deal with provision for special educational needs in Europe and with the number of pupils with special educational needs again being referred to. There will be an attempt to distinguish different policies concerning the approaches taken towards special needs education. In 5.3, specific issues with respect to these policies on special needs education across Europe will be considered and in 5.4, the actual practice of special needs education will be discussed. Finally, in 5.5 a comparison is made between the current situation and that of the early 1990s. In this section an assessment of recent developments and trends in comparison with the 1992 report of the European Commission will be made.

5.2 Provision, number of pupils and policies towards special educational needs

In relation to provision of special needs education in Europe, some trends were highlighted in Chapter Four. An important finding was that in most countries a wide range of facilities is available. Every country has already implemented, or is implementing, strategies in order to make integrative or inclusive education possible. Some countries place emphasis upon the education of pupils with special educational needs within mainstream classrooms, others still have large separate special education systems.

In Chapter Four, the percentages of registered pupils with special educational needs and the percentages of pupils in segregated settings were given for all of the participating countries. It was emphasised that in some countries, quite high percentages of pupils are recognised as having special educational needs - more than 10% for some countries - whilst in others only a few pupils are identified as having special educational needs (less than 0.5%). It was concluded that these differences do not reflect differences in incidence of special educational needs, but more probably are the consequence of differences in assessment procedures, funding regulations, educational arrangements and so forth.

In relation to the percentages of pupils that are placed in separate special settings, the differences are also huge; some countries place less than 1% of all pupils in separate schools and classes, others more than 4%. It was concluded that the countries in the Northwest of Europe appear to place pupils more frequently in special settings, as opposed to Southern European and Scandinavian countries. Again, these differences can not be easily attributed to a specific set of factors evident on either the level of policies or practices. However, these differences might also be related to some demographic characteristics such as population density. Below, an analysis is made of the relation between population density and the percentage of pupils in segregated special setings.

In order to correlate the two variables, population density and segration, it was necessary to assign a more specific figure to Finland for the percentage of segregated pupils than the reported 2 to 3%. This was needed in order to calculate the correlation coefficient on the 'ratio' level. Therefore, the percentage of segregated pupils in Finland was fixed at (an arbitrary) 2.5%.

As expected, population density figures - in terms of average number of inhabitants per square kilometre - varied enormously: from 13 (Norway), 15 (Finland) to 376 (England) and 436 (Belgium, Flemish Community). The average population density is about 160 (standard deviation = 133). The average percentage of segregated pupils in the compulsory age range is 2.0% (standard deviation = 1.5).

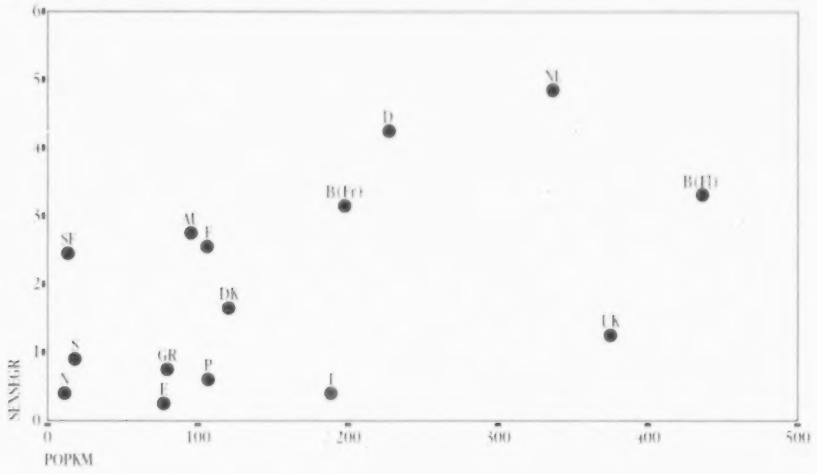
In Figure 1, the countries that participated in the study are plotted in a graph, with the percentage of pupils in segregated settings and population density on the two axes.

The correlation between the two variables was unexpectedly high: 0.52 (at N = 15), which is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. In statistical terms, about 27% of the variation of the percentage of segregated pupils is explained by population density.

In taking a closer look at the positions of countries in Figure 1, it can easily be seen that some countries fit better into the 'model' than others. Analysing the relationship between the two variables without England, a country with a 'deviant' position in Figure 1, there is an increase of the correlation to 0.66 (N = 14), which is significant at $\alpha = 0.01$; 43% of the variation in segregation is then explained by population density.

Indeed, the position of England in Figure 1 is different from the other countries. Given the population density of England, a higher percentage of pupils in segregated provision is expected. Some other countries' positions also 'deviate' from the ideal configuration, such as Finland, Italy and Flemish Community of

Figure 1: Position of countries on population density (POPKM) and segregation (SENSEGR); UK = England



Belgium. It is beyond the scope of this report to generate hypotheses for these findings or to analyse them further in detail. However, for the case of England, it may be assumed that an 'early' and effective policy on integration (perhaps emanating initially from the Warnock report of 1978) has indeed resulted in less separate placements. It should be stressed immediately that these and other hypothesis cannot be confirmed (nor falsified) by the findings of this study. Also, as previously stated, these findings do not express a qualitative judgement regarding practices in different countries.

Theoretically the relationship between population density and segregation could be the result of the influence of a third (known or unknown) variable. However, in general it appears fairly straightforward to attribute the differences in the percentages of segregated pupils to differences in population density. It can be assumed that in countries with a low population density, segregation in separate special schools has some clear disadvantages. Firstly, long travel distances are the result, which are time consuming since pupils have to be transported to other towns or cities. Secondly, there are negative social consequences: pupils are taken out of their social environment and have less time with their friends in their own neighbourhood. Furthermore, special settings in sparsely populated areas are not very cost-effective. In countries with high population densities, special placements

have less negative consequences: travel distances are smaller, negative social effects are relatively restricted and special placements could be more cost-effective.

Of course, differences in the placement of pupils with special educational needs reflect more than simply the differences in population density. Some countries do have a long history in integration policy and practice, whilst others have only recently begun developing an integration policy. It is not the intention here to neglect these differences or to deny the huge efforts that have been undertaken in some countries. It should, however, be recognised that other, seemingly trivial, factors - such as population density - may play important roles in determining the findings reported here.

In theory, a number of reasons can be identified as explanatory factors for the frameworks of developing integrated practices in countries. Generally, ideological arguments play an important role (civil rights and related views). Closely connected to these are the social reasons and arguments that can form the basis for integrative policies and practices (e.g. the viewpoint that a pupil should not be educated outside of his or her social environment). Practical factors such as economics could also play a role here. Generally, the availability of services is another decisive factor. It can be assumed that in most countries all these factors (and some others as well) contribute to the current policies and practices relating to integration. A key fact is that in densely populated areas, the practical objections against segregation are minimal; this could easily contribute to the higher percentages of pupils with special educational needs in segregated settings.

In combining both the findings on firstly registration procedures and secondly the different special education facilities, the countries can be grouped into different categories to describe their integration policies.

In the first group, those countries are placed that can be identified as *'one-track'* countries (a term coined by Pijl & Meijer, 1991). These countries use all their energy to integrate almost all pupils into the mainstream school. They have a policy and a practice that is oriented towards more or less 'full inclusion'. Generally, there is a wide variety of services, but these are mainly concentrated within the mainstream school. The percentage of the pupils in special schools or special classes in these countries is below 1% and in the main, these countries do not label high numbers of pupils as having special educational needs (less than 2%). Within the sample for this study, Italy, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Norway and Greece belong to this group.

In the second group those countries can be placed that have a clear *two-track policy:* these countries operate at two levels: improving both their mainstream

education school system and special education school system simultaneously. In these countries there are, or were recently, two separate laws for mainstream and special education. The special education school system in those countries is rather large and generally very differentiated. These countries have more than 3% of all pupils in a highly differentiated and separate special education system. They generally do not register high numbers of pupils within mainstream education as having special educational needs. Examples of countries within the two-track group are Belgium (both Flemish and French Community), Germany and the Netherlands.

In the third group, those countries can be placed that have *multi-track approach*. Generally, these countries do not have one solution (mainstream school usually with a variety of services) or just two options (mainstream or special school) but show a *continuum of services* in between the two systems. Services include all sorts of (part-time or full-time) special classes, different forms of co-operation between schools, outreach activities (teachers and pupils from special and mainstream schools who change temporarily or part-time) and so on. These countries have about 1 to 3% of pupils in special settings (including full-time special classes). Examples are England and Wales, Austria, Finland, France and Denmark. These countries sometimes register high numbers of pupils as having special educational needs (for example Denmark, England and Wales and Finland).

At the European level, some interesting developments have taken place in the last ten years. Firstly, in two-track countries a movement towards more multi-track approaches can be identified. In countries like Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands we see that more facilities emerge in between the special and mainstream school system. Also, in these countries quite strong legal steps have been taken (and are still being developed) to overcome the sharp distinction between mainstream and special education.

Furthermore, in the one-track countries, a development is evident where the few special schools still in existence are being transformed in the direction of resource centres (sometimes called knowledge- or expertise-centres). There is a clear development towards these resource centres also evident within the 'multi-track'-group.

5.3 Some policy issues

In this section a few central topics concerning policy making on special educational needs in Europe will be examined. Specific attention will be paid to four particular issues:

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- financing of special needs education
- output and special needs education
- monitoring of special needs
- governmental responsibilities for special needs education.

Financing of special needs education

Funding is an essential element in integration. If a country supports integration, then legislative and especially financial regulations have to be adapted to meet that goal. If these regulations are not in accordance with the specified goals of integration, the chances of achieving these goals are presumably low. In this sense financing may be a decisive factor in achieving integration. Country descriptions clearly show that the funding system can inhibit integration processes. The effects of an inadequate funding system are predictable. Hegarty (1995) postulates this as follows:

'The way in which schools are financed can affect teachers' receptivity to pupils with special needs. The latter generally require more resources - of time and materials - than other pupils, sometimes, as in the case of deaf pupils or those with severe learning difficulties, substantially more. If regular schools are not resourced accordingly when they take on the education of these pupils, it is extremely difficult to build up positive attitudes on the part of teachers or to sustain them over a period of time. (...) Apart from making integration more difficult to achieve, this also means that teachers in regular schools are less likely to be receptive to having pupils with special needs in their schools.' (p. 127)

In some countries, funding is not linked to pupils, but to the location they are educated. In practice, this means that a referral to a special school is rewarded. Maintaining pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, or their return from the special to the mainstream school, is insufficiently encouraged. Thus, within such systems of financing a bonus is put on segregation, whilst integration is discouraged.

A separate special education system reflects the attitude that special teachers and other expert professionals must conduct the education of pupils with special educational needs. This division has several negative consequences: the help required is linked to a special education setting, which largely results in more and more pupils being placed in separate schools. Separate special education is then an attractive alternative as it is perceived as providing all the necessary services for extra help.

In a separate study conducted by European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education the issue of financing of special educational needs will be dealt with extensively. This study tries to identify the different finance mechanisms in European countries in relation to the issue of special education and integration. Furthermore, it focuses upon the most recent developments concerning financing of special needs education. This study will be published by the end of 1998.

The current study also reveals some interesting findings on this issue. In some countries, the issue of financing plays an important role in policy-making and in the practice of special needs education. Some countries mention that the funding system is responsible for the increase of identified pupils with special educational needs (for example Austria), others (for example Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands) point at the funding system as being a barrier to more integrative practices. As a result of group discussions during the meetings of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, it was argued that there were clear links between financial systems and the degree to which pupils with special educational needs are welcomed in mainstream schools.

The country with the most obvious shift in policy on the field of financing of special needs education is the Netherlands. Recently, all mainstream primary schools and a large majority (70%) of special schools (the schools for learning disabled and for educable mentally retarded children) have been grouped into about 300 regional clusters. It was further decided that each of the 300 school clusters would be funded equally, based upon the *total enrolment in primary education*. Until now there have been huge regional differences in the incidence of the mentioned special educational needs that were funded accordingly.

About 50% of the funds for special needs education will be transferred directly to the existing special schools (they used to receive 100% of funding) and the other 50% will be allocated to the primary schools that co-operate in the school clusters. This will be implemented during 1998. In the future, some regions may have to close special schools (where there is a high degree of segregated provisions compared to other regions) while other areas may receive additional funds as a reward for an effective regional integration policy.

For the more severe special educational needs an alternative funding system will be implemented. In such situations, a pupil-bound budget will be introduced in the Netherlands.

Output and special educational needs

A further complex topic within the field of special educational needs is the current

emphasis upon *educational outcomes*. In European society, there is growing attention directed towards the output of educational processes in terms of measurable academic attainments. One of the most explicit examples of this is in England and Wales where the publication of results of National Curriculum assessment has drawn much attention and discussion. The results are published in the form of 'league tables' of schools and local education authorities, rank ordered in line with pupils' scores attained in nationally conducted tests.

Of course, it is not surprising that societies generally ask for more attention to be paid to outcomes in terms of 'profits' for the investment of education. As a result, market thinking is introduced into education and parents start to behave as clients. Schools are made 'accountable' for the results they achieve and the tendency to judge schools on the basis of their 'output' is increased.

It should be stressed that this development has manifest dangers for vulnerable pupils and their parents. Firstly, parents of pupils who are not identified as having special educational needs, will tend to choose a school where the learning process is perceived to be efficient and effective and not hindered by 'slow learners', or other pupils that need 'extra attention'. Generally, parents want what they perceive to be the best school for their child. Secondly, schools will most likely begin to favour pupils that contribute to higher outputs. Pupils with special educational needs not only contribute to more variation within the class, but also to lower average achievements. These two factors pose a direct threat to the promotion of mainstream integration of pupils with special educational needs. This is particularly the case within a context of free school choice and the absence of an obligation for schools to admit all pupils within their catchment area. In this sense, the wish to achieve higher outputs and the wish to integrate pupils with special educational needs can be in direct opposition. This dilemma requires serious attention. A number of countries within the sample of this study pointed to this dilemma and it can be expected that others will follow in expressing their concerns in the near future. It is a clear tension field that has to be addressed in order to protect the position of vulnerable pupils.

Monitoring

Related to the discussion in the previous section is the issue of 'monitoring' and 'evaluation'. As part of the need to ensure 'accountability' in education, monitoring and evaluation are essential elements. This is especially true within the framework of special needs education. There is, firstly, a growing need to increase the efficient and effective use of public funds. Secondly - and this is also the case within the

context of integration - the users of educational facilities (particularly pupils with special educational needs and their parents) have to be convinced that the provision offered is of good quality. Earmarking of funds and forms of (external) monitoring, control and evaluation of provision are therefore necessary.

It is precisely within this area that a certain amount of tension may emerge. In some country reports it was clearly stated that the development towards integration requires the reduction of labelling and assessment procedures. It was indeed argued as being very important that funds are directed as much as possible towards educational processes such as teaching and providing additional services and help, instead of being directed to diagnosis, assessment, testing and associated processes. That stated, it would be wrong to discount the importance of monitoring and evaluating the development of pupils with special educational needs, for example to ensure the match between needs and provision. Furthermore, parents have a right to be informed about their child's progress.

It is a characteristic of countries with a highly segregated system that they can easily report upon the numbers of pupils with specific types of special educational needs and how and where they are educated. Of course this 'transparency' may be viewed as being in conflict with the wish to integrate more pupils with special educational needs. Conversely, countries that have developed integrative approaches often lack information relating to numbers of pupils with special educational needs and the way they are educated. As stated above, in the case of vulnerable pupils, it is especially important to know how they progress and how they are treated within the educational system.

Other organisations have dealt with this field of tension. In the co-operation between Eurostat and UNESCO, the OECD is conducting a project aimed at developing indicators in the domain of special education and to collect, validate and disseminate reliable and comparable statistics in the field. UNESCO stressed the need for the collection of internationally comparable indicators of progress regarding inclusion (see the 'Salamanca-statement', 1994):

'Progress towards inclusion should be carefully monitored through the collection of statistics capable of revealing the number of students with disabilities who benefit from resources, expertise and equipment intended for special needs education as well as the number of students with special needs enrolled in regular schools' (UNESCO, 1994)

Some countries in the sample here, have recently developed a policy focussing upon increasing monitoring in special needs education. For example, the Finnish report states that:

'The National Board of Education (...) is launching a research and development project for the years 1997-2001 (...). The purpose is to improve the operational organisation and integration practices of special education (...) and also to gather information on the successfulness and feasibility of integration practices. Besides these, another goal is to enhance the identification of students in need of special help, as well as their access to appropriate support and instruction.'

Other countries express the need for adequate monitoring systems as well. A specific role in any such system can be played by the individual educational programme or plan (IEP). Such a programme describes the specific adaptations to the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. This programme may also serve as a method for monitoring such pupils on higher aggregation levels. This issue will be dealt with more extensively in section 5.4.

Governmental responsibility for special needs education

A central issue in special needs education is the issue of responsibility. In most countries, the responsibility for special education is centralised within the ministry of education or other education authorities. In some countries, other ministries are also involved. France is a clear example of a country where the responsibility for the educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is divided over different ministries. In France, special education is not only the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, but also the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and Ministry of Justice.

In Portugal, the Ministry of Education has the main responsibility for pupils with special educational needs. However, there are special schools under the responsibility of the Solidarity and Social Assistance Ministry. It is expected that this responsibility will progressively shift to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is responsible for all the integration into mainstream public schools and also has agreements with private (profit and non-profit making) special institutions.

This division of responsibilities in some countries is most likely the result of tradition and as such, these configurations may have strong historical roots. However, one clear disadvantage of such a division of responsibilities, is the fact that different approaches towards educational innovation in general and towards the issue of integration more specifically, might emerge. Whilst the shift from a medical paradigm relating to special educational needs towards more modern paradigms - for example the educational and interactive paradigm in diagnosis,

assessment and also in types of provision - is most likely to emerge within the context of education, within other ministries this might be a different case. Furthermore, it seems that monitoring, evaluation and information gathering concerning special educational needs provision (for example concerning the provision and the number of pupils who are served within that provision) are complicated in those countries where there exists a certain degree of duality in responsibilities and administration.

Although in most countries the ministries of education have the main responsibility for special needs education, there is a clear and widespread trend to *decentralisation*. Decentralisation of responsibilities seems to play a key role in a number of countries. For example, in England and Wales and the Netherlands, decentralisation is a crucial theme in the debate concerning special education provision. In Finland, the reforms of school administration in the 1990s, with decentralisation of decision-making being passed to the municipalities, have decreased the number of special schools. Local forces can more easily influence the organisation of special education.

In other Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Denmark and Norway) special needs education is strongly affected by decentralisation. In Norway, the Act on Primary and Lower Secondary Education makes each municipality responsible for providing education for all pupils who are residents in the municipality regardless of their abilities.

The French report states that there is a strong development to decentralisation in France. This allows for more adaptation within local and regional circumstances and promising developments can be accelerated within the local or regional context. Pressure of parents is then a facilitating factor for change.

Generally, it is felt that integration is better enhanced within the local or regional situation. There is indeed some evidence for this (OECD, 1995, UNESCO, 1994) and UNESCO refers to the influence of decentralisation as follows:

'Decentralization and local-area-based planning favours greater involvement of communities in education and training of people with special educational needs' (UNESCO, 1994).

It can be argued that it is essential that the implementation of an inclusion policy is delegated to local policy-makers and school principals. This group of actors in education operate at a level which makes it possible to influence daily practice in schools and classrooms and at the same time they are able to secure co-operation between schools, regional school support systems and special services above school level.

There is a clear need to adapt national policies to varying regional circumstances and a wish to have clear and short lines of communication to responsible actors. It appears that decentralisation is indeed a central issue in the provision of special needs education. Local regional responsibility can be viewed as an enhancing factor for integrative practices.

5.4 Practices

Most of the trends in the practice of special needs education have already been described in the preceding chapters. It is not intended to repeat those here extensively, but rather to highlight a few trends that have not yet been discussed or that require more attention. A number of common issues that have been reported as problematic in the various country reports will also be covered. Firstly, the situation in mainstream education, the specific role of the curriculum, including the emphasis on the individual educational programme or plan (IEP) and the situation in secondary education will be addressed. Finally, the potential new role of special schools will be examined.

The curriculum

Recent perspectives on integration or inclusion stress the fact that these concepts are, in the first instance, an educational reform issue and not a placement issue. Integration begins with the right of all pupils to follow mainstream education. Some countries have stated this clearly in direct, legal terms and have changed their educational approach in terms of offering more provision within mainstream education. Of course, as was demonstrated in 5.2, the different approaches are closely correlated to the current position of special education in those countries.

Countries that have their main emphasis on providing facilities within the mainstream school stress the view that the curriculum framework should encompass all pupils. That said, some specific adaptations to the curriculum might be necessary. This is mostly done in terms of an individual educational programme. It is clear from the country descriptions in the preceding chapters, that in almost all of the countries the individual educational programme plays a major role in special needs education within the mainstream setting. It is one of the current trends across Europe to clearly specify pupils' needs, goals and the means of achieving those goals, in an individual document that serves both as an expression and specification of the degree and type of adaptations to the mainstream curriculum as well as a tool for evaluating the progress of pupils with special

educational needs. It may also serve as a 'contract' between the different 'actors': parents, the teacher and other professionals.

The individual educational programme offers new possibilities in terms of the key points discussed in the previous section: monitoring and evaluation. The individual programmes' information could be the basis for a database where the pupils are registered on a country level. This database may serve as a tool in monitoring the progress of pupils with special educational needs on local and on national levels. It could also be a useful tool for gathering statistics concerning the number of pupils with special educational needs, type of provision, type of adaptations to the curriculum and so on.

A further key topic in the field of special educational needs and the curriculum is the provision within the secondary education sector. As is shown in various country reports, integration generally progresses well within the primary education sector, but upon transfer to the secondary sector, serious problems emerge. It is a well documented phenomenon that increasing subject specialisation as well as the different organisational methods of secondary schooling, result in the fact that integration encounters serious difficulties within this sector. It was reported that, generally, the 'gap' between pupils with special educational needs and their peers increases with age. It should be stressed that almost all countries 'agreed' that the topic of integration within the secondary sector is one of their main areas of concern. Specific problem areas were identified as insufficient teacher training and less positive teacher attitudes.

The role of special schools

As has been pointed out previously, there is a clear development towards the transformation of special schools into resource centres. These centres have a wide variety of tasks, one of which is the support of mainstream schools in dealing with pupils with special educational needs. A number of countries have implemented, or will implement, such a provision in the near future. These centres may have a regional task for a wider range of pupils. They may also have national responsibility for certain specific target groups. It should be emphasised that this transformation of special schools to resource centres is a general trend in Europe.

Of course, this transformation has huge consequences for special education. The consequences for special schools and workers in special education have been described extensively and in detail in other reports, for example in those of the OECD and the UNESCO (OECD 1995; UNESCO 1994). Briefly, special education has to switch from a pupil-based educational institute into a support structure, or

resource centre for teachers, parents and others. Their main task is to give support to mainstream schools, to develop materials and methods, to gather information and provide it to parents and teachers, to take care of the necessary liaison between educational and non-educational institutions and to give support when transition from school to work takes place. In some cases, special educators and special schools arrange short-term help for individual pupils or small groups of pupils.

5.5 Trends since 1990

The central question for this study will now be addressed: what are now the main important developments and trends in comparison with the report of the European Commission of 1992?

Below, the most striking developments will be highlighted, but before doing this, readers should be reminded of the problem of comparisons in general and concerning this topic specifically (see section 2.4). This study draws upon a different sample of countries in comparison to the EC study of 1992 as well as a different methodology and different respondents within the participating countries. In relation to certain topics, as for example the numbers of pupils, countries have used different methods in their calculations (depending on different compulsory age ranges). Nevertheless, it has been possible to generate some general findings and to point to certain trends in the last six to seven years. The comparison with 1990 reveals ongoing trends, a few new developments and some definite challenges.

Trends and progress

1. There is a movement in which countries with a clear two-track system of special education (a relatively large special education system besides the mainstream system) develop a continuum of services in between the two systems. Furthermore, special schools are more and more defined as a resource for mainstream schools.
2. Legislative progress concerning integration has been made in a number of countries - in particular, countries with a relatively large separated special education system have achieved new legislative frameworks concerning special educational needs within the mainstream school.
3. Some countries have planned to change their funding system in order to achieve more integrated services. In some other countries there is a growing awareness of the importance of an adequate funding system.
4. Parental choice has become a major topic in a number of countries in the last few years. There is an attempt to achieve more integrated provision through the

increase of the possibility for parents to choose the educational setting for their child.

5. The transformation of special schools into resource centres has been continued in most countries. In some other countries this model is now being initiated.
6. The role of the individual educational programme or plan (IEP) in the practice of special education is a common trend in European countries. There has been clear progress made in relation to this issue.
7. Countries are trying to move from a psycho-medical paradigm of special provision to a more educationally oriented or interactive paradigm. However, at the moment this is mainly done in terms of changing concepts and views. The implementation of these new views in the practice of special education still needs to be developed.

Challenges

1. Generally the tension field between the pressure for increasing academic outputs from schools and the position of vulnerable pupils is increasing. This will be a clear area of concern in the near future.
2. The position of pupils with special educational needs within the mainstream school and the quality of the services offered to them, needs to be monitored more systematically in Europe. Monitoring and evaluation procedures need to be developed and in general the issue of accountability needs to be addressed within the framework of special needs education. This is especially required within the framework of the increasing decentralisation in most countries. There is an associated need for a systematic evaluation and review procedure in order to assess these developments and their outcomes.
3. The individual educational programme or plan (IEP) could be play an important role in terms of monitoring and evaluation.
4. Integration within the secondary education sector is an area of concern. Development of the possibilities for teacher training (in-service) and the development of positive attitudes are challenges for the near future.
5. A 'rough' estimate of the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in European countries reveals that about 2% of all pupils are educated in separate settings. It is not possible to assess the extent to which progress has been made in terms of changing numbers of pupils in segregated or integrated provision in countries. However, countries with a relatively large special education provision in separate settings have shown an ongoing increase in the percentage of pupils educated in special schools during the last years. Although exact figures are

lacking, it can be assumed that in the last six to seven years, little progress has been made on the European level in this respect. On the contrary, the most reliable estimate is one of a slight increase in terms of segregation. Some countries still have to put their changing policies into practice. However, generally there is a basis for optimism. Particularly in the countries where there has been a vast increase in numbers of pupils in segregated provision, new, promising integration policies are now being implemented.

6 Summary

This report focuses upon the current 'state of the art' in school integration policies and practices in 14 European countries, i.e. all the countries of the EU (except Ireland and Luxembourg) and Norway. These countries are members of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (all the EU countries and Norway and Iceland).

It has been produced on behalf of the European Commission who asked the European Agency to reassess the current situation with regard to integration and to describe developments since the situation as described in the EC study entitled *Report of the Commission on the progress with regard to the implementation of the policy of school integration in the Member States (1988-1991)*, a report published in November 1992.

This current study report was written at the beginning of 1998 and the descriptions and findings refer to the situation until 1997. In June 1997 a questionnaire was sent to all the Working Partners of the Agency in the member countries and these Working Partners submitted country reports during the second half of 1997. It was on the basis of these country reports that this synthesis report was written.

This study is thus oriented towards trends and developments in provision for pupils with special educational needs in the European countries. Although some quantitative data is presented (number of special educational needs pupils for example), the emphasis lies upon qualitative developments.

In Chapter Two, the framework and methodology for the study is described in full. The different concepts that are used in the questionnaire are clarified and the sample and analysis are detailed.

Chapter Three contains the country descriptions of the participating countries. The country descriptions all deal with the same topics:

- Integration policy
- Assessment
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Number of pupils with special educational needs

- Curriculum and teaching
- Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration.

Whilst the information is presented country-wise in Chapter Three, Chapter Four offers a more thematic overview of the issues that have been dealt with. It was argued that:

* Some countries have clearly defined their special education system as a resource for mainstream schools. More countries are now starting to follow that approach.
* Parental choice has become a topic for legislative changes in a few countries.
* Countries with separate laws for special and mainstream education are now developing one legal framework for both systems. Legislation concerning special needs education within the secondary sector is now being developed or has recently been developed in a few countries.
* In one country, the change of funding of special needs education is an important innovation.

In relation to the *assessment* of pupils with special educational needs, it was found that definitions and categories of special educational needs vary across countries. Some countries define only one or two types of special educational needs. Others categorise pupils with special educational needs into more than 10 types. Most countries distinguish 6 -10 types of special educational needs.

In almost every country, the concept of special educational needs is on the agenda. It is felt that the medical approach to the concept of 'handicap' should be replaced by a more educational approach i.e. the consequences of the disability for education become central. However, at the same time it is clear that this is a very complex issue and at the moment countries struggle with the practical implementation of this paradigm. Nevertheless, the description of disabilities in terms of educational consequences is being debated in almost all the European countries.

Related to this discussion is the current development of using the information gained from the assessment of pupils with special educational needs for the implementation of appropriate and adapted forms of the curriculum. This is mostly done in terms of developing an individual educational programme or plan (IEP).

In terms of provision of special needs education in Europe, a number of trends can be recognised. Firstly, there is a clear development towards the transformation of special schools into *resource centres*. This is a very common trend in Europe.

Almost all the countries report that they are planning to develop, already are developing or already have developed a network of resource centres in their countries.

Generally the following tasks are distinguished for these centres:

- provision of training and courses for teachers and other professionals
- development and dissemination of materials and information regarding teaching methods
- support for mainstream schools and parents
- short-time or part-time help for individual pupils
- support with respect to the entrance into the labour market

Some of these centres have a national task, mostly with respect to certain specific target groups (especially in association with low-incidence special educational needs), others have a wider and more regional task.

A second finding from the country descriptions is that in most countries a wide range of facilities is available. Every country has already implemented, or is implementing, policies in order to make integrative education possible. Of course, some countries have more experience of integration than others do and some countries have just started to improve the conditions for integration in mainstream education.

The *number of pupils that are registered as having special educational needs* varies enormously. Some countries register less than 1% of all pupils, others register more than 10%. These differences in the percentage of registered pupils between countries may reflect differences in assessment procedures, funding arrangements and provision. Of course, these do *not reflect differences in the incidence of special educational needs* across countries.

The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in *segregated provision* (special schools and special classes) varies widely across Europe. Some countries place less than 1% of all pupils in separate schools and classes, others more than 4%. In particular, the countries in the Northwest of Europe appear to place pupils more frequently in special settings as opposed to Southern European and Scandinavian countries. Across Europe, about 2% of all pupils are educated in segregated settings.

A number of common findings and trends are evident in relation to the curriculum, the training of the teachers and the attitudes of teachers. As pointed out previously, most countries make use of an *individual educational programme* for pupils with special educational needs. The manner in which the

mainstream curriculum is adapted, the necessary additional resources, the goals and the evaluation of the educational approach are usually incorporated in such a document. These adaptations can take different forms and in some cases, for specific categories of pupils, these adaptations may even have the form of deleting certain subjects of the general curriculum.

With regard to the *training of teachers*, there are significant differences between countries. Some countries have inserted a structural part of training in special educational needs into the initial teacher-training programme for all teachers. Others - and this may reflect the different organisational approaches to educating pupils with special educational needs - have almost a full separate track for special education teachers.

There are different approaches used to achieve higher standards of knowledge and skills of teachers: special education as a structural provision within initial teacher training, separate training for special teachers (in addition to initial teacher training), in service training courses, and combinations of these. Some countries have recently implemented, or are now implementing, intensive programmes that are 'injected' into professionals in education on a wide scale.

When considering *attitudes of teachers*, it was frequently mentioned in country reports that positive attitudes depend strongly upon experiences (with pupils with special educational needs); teacher training; the availability of support and on other, specific conditions such as class size and workload of teachers. Particularly within secondary education, teachers are less willing to educate pupils with special educational needs in their classrooms. Furthermore, teachers are generally reluctant to integrate pupils with severe emotional and behavioural problems.

The issue of the *role of special schools* in terms of integration is of course closely related to the prevalent educational system in a country. In countries with almost no special schools, their role is structurally modest. In countries with a relatively large special education system, special schools are more actively involved in the process towards integration. In those countries co-operation between special and mainstream education is a key factor. However, in those countries voices are heard that the process of integration threatens special schools. This is more or less the direct consequence of having a relatively large special school system: on the one hand, the co-operation of special schools in the process towards integration is necessary, on the other hand the integration process itself can be perceived as a direct danger for them. In such situations, integration is difficult to achieve as mainstream schools are more or less used to referring their problems to other parts of the school system i.e. the special

schools. Additionally, special teachers and other professionals working in the special school system see themselves often as the experts and are usually convinced that they fulfil a particular and unique need. It is extremely difficult to change such a status quo.

When considering the *attitudes of parents* it was reported that parents generally have positive attitudes towards integration. It is clear that attitudes of parents are largely determined by personal experiences. Positive experiences of integration are quite seldom evident in countries where the facilities are concentrated in the special school system and not available for mainstream schools. However, if these services are offered in mainstream schools parents appear to soon develop positive attitudes.

In countries with a segregated special school system, parental pressure towards integration is increasing. In countries where integration is common practice, positive attitudes of parents are also reported. At the same time, these countries report that in the case of more severe special educational needs, parents (and pupils) sometimes prefer special education in a separated setting. Particularly in relation to the more severe needs (deaf, severe emotional and behavioural problems) some parents believe that special schools have more resources, competence and skills than mainstream schools.

With regard to the *barriers to integration*, a few countries point at the importance of an appropriate funding system. Obviously, the existence of large and differentiated special school system may hinder integration. Other important factors are concerned with the availability of sufficient conditions and support within mainstream schools. If the knowledge, skills, attitudes and materials are not available within mainstream settings, integration of pupils with special educational needs will be difficult to achieve. As was emphasised earlier, adequate teacher training (in initial teacher training or through in-service training) is an essential prerequisite for successful integration.

In Chapter Five, a number of common trends in Europe were highlighted and additional analysis of the data revealed some interesting findings. A high correlation between the percentage of pupils in segregated provision and the population density of the European countries was indicated. It was assumed that in countries with a low population density, segregation in separate special schools has some disadvantages (practical, social and financial), whilst in countries with high population densities, special placements have fewer negative consequences.

It was possible to group the participating countries into three different 'policy' groups: *'one-track'*, *'two-track'* and *'multi-track'* approaches, depending upon

their emphasis on mainstream education, on mainstream and special education, or on mainstream and special education and intermediate structures.

At the European level, some interesting developments have taken place in the last ten years. Firstly, in two-track countries there is an evident movement towards more multi-track approaches. Furthermore, in the one-track and multi-track countries there is a development where special schools are being transformed in the direction of resource centres.

In Chapter Five, attention was paid to a few specific areas of concern. It was argued that in some countries funding is not linked to pupils, but to the location they are educated within. In practice, this means that a referral to a special school is rewarded. Maintaining pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools, or their return from the special to the mainstream school, is insufficiently encouraged. Thus, with such systems a bonus is put on segregation, while integration is financially discouraged.

The tension between moves to increase academic outputs of schools and the position of pupils with special educational needs was discussed. It was stressed that this development contains some dangers for vulnerable pupils and their parents. Firstly, parents of pupils who are not identified as having special educational needs, could tend to choose a school where the learning process is not perceived to be hindered by slow learners or other pupils that need extra attention. Secondly, schools may be inclined to favour giving places to pupils that contribute to higher academic outputs. This development requires further investigation.

The need for a reliable system of monitoring the development of pupils with special educational needs was also discussed in Chapter Five. It is extremely important to monitor and evaluate the development of such pupils, not only in order to increase the match between needs and provision, but also in terms of gathering and providing national and international data within the field of special needs education. The individual educational programme or plan could play a specific role in such a system.

A central issue in this field is the issue of responsibility for special needs education. In most countries the responsibility for special education is centralised within the ministries of education. In some other countries, other ministries are also involved. A clear disadvantage is evident with such a division of responsibilities: the fact is that different approaches towards educational innovation in general and towards the issue of integration specifically, may become apparent. Whilst the movement from a medical paradigm of special educational needs towards more modern paradigms is most likely to emerge within the context

of education, within other ministries this might not be the case. Furthermore, it seems that monitoring, evaluation and information gathering concerning special educational needs (provision and number of pupils) are complicated in those countries where there is an apparent division of responsibilities.

Although in most countries the ministry of education has the responsibility for special needs education, there is a clear and widespread trend towards decentralisation. Decentralisation of responsibilities seems to play a key role in a number of countries. Local or regional responsibility may enhance the development of integrative practices due to the shorter, easier lines of communication between the community and the responsible policy makers as well as the increased possibility to influence local and regional circumstances and developments.

Close attention was paid to the crucial role of the curriculum. As is shown in various country reports, integration generally progresses well within the framework of the curriculum within the primary education sector, but within secondary education, serious problems emerge. Almost all countries 'agreed' that the topic of integration within the secondary sector was one of their main areas of concern. Specific problem areas within this field centre upon insufficient teacher training and less positive teacher attitudes.

Finally, Chapter Five ends with an assessment of the developments and trends in Europe evident in the last six to seven years. Highlighted were trends and progress on the one hand and challenges on the other. Progress was made on the level of defining roles of the special school as a resource centre. Also generally there was progress on the level of legislation: in a number of countries special needs education has been included as an integral part of legislation relating to mainstream schooling. In some instances, funding systems in countries were drastically changed. Parental choice has also become a major topic of concern in the field of special needs education. Furthermore, the role of the individual educational programme has become a central issue in European countries.

In terms of challenges, the following points were highlighted:

1. Generally the tension field between the pressure for increasing academic outputs of schools and the position of vulnerable pupils is increasing. This will be a key area of concern in the near future.
2. The position of pupils with special educational needs within the mainstream school and the quality of the services given to them, needs to be monitored more systematically in Europe. Monitoring and evaluation procedures need to be developed and in general, the issue of accountability needs to be addressed

within the framework of special needs education. This is especially required within the framework of increasing decentralisation in most countries. There is a need for a systematic evaluation and review procedure in order to assess these developments and their outcomes.

3. The individual educational programme could play an important role in terms of monitoring and evaluation.
4. Integration within the secondary education sector is an area of concern. Development of possibilities for teacher training (in-service) and the development of positive attitudes are challenges for the near future.
5. A 'rough' estimate of the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in European countries reveals that about 2% of all pupils are educated in separate settings. It is not possible to assess the extent to which progress has been made in terms of the number of pupils in segregated or integrated provision in European countries. However, countries with a relatively large special education provision in separate settings have shown an ongoing increase in the percentages of pupils that are educated in special schools during the last years. Though exact figures are unavailable, it can be assumed that in the last six to seven years not much progress has been made on the European level in terms of reduced numbers of pupils in segregated provision. On the contrary, the most reliable estimate is one of a slight increase of the number of segregated pupils. Some countries still have to fully put their integration policies into practice. However, generally there is a basis for optimism. Particularly in the countries where there was an increase in numbers of pupils in segregated provision, the implementation of promising policies designed to promote future integration is clearly evident.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire: 'Mapping out data on special educational needs provision'

Data on special educational needs provision

1 An overview of the state of the art in integration (or inclusion), integration policy and of legislation and regulations, including:
- the general situation in your country concerning integration/inclusion policies and practices
- specific promising projects, interesting recent developments, new approaches and recent discussions
- main current problem areas in integration
- current ordinary and special education laws and recent developments in policy-making concerning special education, integration or inclusion (including recent proposals to and discussions in Parliament)

Are there any studies dealing with the evaluation of integration (or segregation) practices and policies? What are the findings?

2 Definitions of special educational needs/handicaps, including
- different categories
- assessment procedures
- referral and placement procedures

3 Provision for children with special educational needs, including information concerning:
- numbers and types of segregated provision (special schools)
- numbers and types of mainstream arrangements like (part-time or full-time) special classes, resource rooms, visiting/peripatetic teachers (describe both the number of teachers involved and the type and size of the target groups of the support)

Describe the different integration models and clarify who is responsible for the facilities and support.

4 Number of pupils with special educational needs (in compulsory age range)
Link the number of pupils with special educational needs to the different types of provision as described in 3. Try to combine number of pupils per age group with type of provision and category of special educational needs.

Thus, give an overview of the number of pupils with special educational needs
- per type of provision
- per category of special educational needs
- per age-group

Do not present percentages but 'raw' numbers. Use as recent statistics as possible!
Present also the **total** number of children (including all children: special, ordinary or outside education) **in the same age groups** as the ones you have used for the children with special educational needs.

5 Curriculum and teaching
- How accessible is the ordinary curriculum for children with SEN? Upon what evidence are your responses based?
- Describe type of adaptations (in terms of goals, organisation and contents of the curriculum)
- What are the teacher training facilities for special educational needs education in the ordinary school?
- Are there any special programmes for training focussed on integration/inclusion?
- Does integration influence the organisation or curriculum of teacher training programmes?
- Is there any information about the attitudes of teachers towards integrating pupils with special educational needs?

6 Special schools
- What is the contribution of special schools to integration/inclusion?
- How do they cope with their position in the integration process?
- To what extent do special teachers have roles in supporting ordinary schools? Can they cope with their role to support teachers in ordinary schools?

7 Additional topics in relation to special provision and integration or inclusion:
- What do parents think of integration (attitudes of parents towards integration)? What are the main topics concerning the position of parents in relation to special educational needs education?
- Is there a positive basis in the society for integration?
- Are there any other barriers to integration?

Appendix B

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European Agency for Development
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This book presents descriptions of educational provision for pupils with special educational needs in 14 European countries. The study was supported and conducted on the behalf of the European Commission who asked the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education to reassess integration policies and practices and to describe developments since the publication of the report on school integration published by the Commission in November 1992.

The study focuses upon recent trends and developments in integration policies, in definitions and assessment of special educational needs and in provision for pupils with special educational needs. It also addresses issues such as curriculum and teacher training, teacher attitudes and the role of special schools. Futhermore, the study assesses developments regarding the number of pupils that are educated in different educational settings across Europe.

General findings with respect to policy-making and the practice of special needs education are highlighted and current developments and areas of concern across Europe are clearly identified. Drawing upon national and international data, this book offers a key source of information for all those who are concerned with special needs education.

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